

## Son of Flanders, The Making of a Consul

The Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training Foreign Affairs Oral History Project

ARNOLD DENYS

Interviewed by: Self

Copyright 1998 ADST

Son of Flanders The Making of a Consul: Diary of an American Foreign Service Officer In Memory of Emiel Denys (1903-1976) Godelieve Maria Denys (1909-1991)

### ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I feel deep gratitude to my late parents for their encouragement to write this memoir. The late Mrs. Katherine McCook Knox, an art historian from Washington, DC, was in great part responsible for my efforts in compiling letters and notes on the American Foreign Service.

My thanks also go to Rhoda Riddell, Ph.D., a writer and teacher, who transcribed and edited my handwritten account, which was taken from my diary. I also wish to thank Art Drexler, who completed the editing and prepared the book for printing.

I wish also to thank the following persons, whom I have known in the long course of my foreign service career, and who have meant so much to me both personally and professionally, and deserve special acknowledgment:

Consul General John D. Barfield

Vice Consul (Ret.) Frank J. Barrett

## Library of Congress

Miguel Angel Garcia

Charles Stuart Kennedy, Director of the Association for Diplomatic Studies, who inspired me with his work on the Foreign Affairs Oral History Program.

Appellate Court Judge Jacques Guffens

Colonel Willy Van Geet, Antwerp Police

Dan W. Henry, Attorney at Law

Ambassador Richard K. Fox, Jr.

Richard Thompson, Coordinator, Professional Issues, American Foreign Service Association.

### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

I have known Arnold Denys since 1961. We first met at a consular staff social at the Consul's home in Panama City. I was intrigued by his claim to multiple university degrees, yet he was only a communications supervisor. Arnold was, for his Panama tour, a "bachelor" like me, which freed him for Canal Zone recreation together.

As tourist visa officer I called him in to help interview French speaking applicants, usually Haitians. Like so many Americans from those days, I well remember that it was Arnold who came into my office to inform me that President Kennedy had been shot.

I recommended him for appointment as consular officer as soon as he fulfilled the requirements as a US citizen. I remember he was in touch with Bishop Wright of Pittsburgh, and he had me accompany him to a reception at the Papal Nuncio's residence in Panama City. After that I jokingly quipped to our CIA station chief one Sunday lunch: I think Arnold is a spy for the Vatican.

## Library of Congress

I was retired (up or out for FSOs) after the Panama tour but I heard from Arnold during each of his subsequent assignments and visited him and his wife in Halifax, accompanied by my mother and aunt. We were graciously entertained. On his Washington assignments, I met with him three times, once in his State Department office, once at my Philadelphia, Pennsylvania home, and once halfway between. I enjoy his Christmas letters and postcards from his travels and am happy to know him and proud to be his friend.

Francis J. Barrett, Esq., FSO (Retired)

### NOTE TO THE READER

Early in my career, when I began this diary of my foreign service memoirs, I had not realized that I would one day want to compile them into a book. At the time, it was simply a way for me to remember details of persons, dates, and events that occurred in my career. Often times, circumstances allowed only brief moments to recollect a day's events. On occasion, evacuations disrupted our routines for weeks at a time. Consequently, I was not as diligent as I should have been about recording the complete names of some visiting diplomats, dignitaries, and other high ranking persons mentioned in this book. To correct these omissions, I have researched my notes and other sources with moderate success. It is hoped that the reader, and those persons mentioned, will understand the circumstances, and forgive the occasional omissions of first names.

This book is intended to serve as a resource for those who wish to have a clearer understanding of the day to day life of a foreign service officer. As a story, it admittedly lacks the drama that a narrative style might have offered, but it does provide a chronology that records events during a most fascinating period of time in US and world history.

It is further hoped that students will be encouraged to consider a life in foreign service as one of great interest, challenge, and personal growth. I am deeply grateful for the opportunity to have served the United States as a foreign service officer, and have

## Library of Congress

prepared this book to record my experiences for others who may share this interest in government service.

### PREFACE

I first thought about entering the United States Foreign Service in my sophomore year at Gonzaga University, in Spokane, Washington. A chain of events prepared me for this adventurous and interesting life. My immigration to the United States from Belgium at the beginning of the Cold War between the USSR and the US, and my immersion in the intellectual and spiritual life of American society, paved the way to seek a diplomatic career suitable to my ideological aspirations and needs. I had good Jesuit teachers who became my mentors and gave me the impetus to contribute my talents to American diplomacy at a time when the United States would play a crucial global role in the aftermath of World War II.

My years (1953-1956) at Georgetown University School of Foreign Service increased my focus on American ideology and its positive leadership in the free world.

After witnessing atrocities and bombing in Flanders between 1939 and 1945, life as an immigrant in the United States in the early 1950s taught me about the duties of American democracy and the sacrifices my adopted land had made to preserve liberty and human rights. I went through an in-depth educational process of Americanization, and my subsequent service as an interpreter in the US Army bolstered my career plans. In the Army I pursued positive contacts with European civilian and military officials and became involved in public relations liaison work, which served me well in later years as a US Consul.

In these memoirs I have tried to show how an American Foreign Service employee and consul can contribute, in a small but effective way, to enhancing America's image abroad. My foreign service career was unique in that it required more zeal and dedication. I was a recent newcomer to this country, entering a field which, in the early 1960s, usually

## Library of Congress

required ten years of American citizenship. In spite of the obstacles I was able to make a relatively successful contribution to the Foreign Service during the post World War II period.

Every post had its hardships, career growth and fulfillment. Panama introduced me to the cultural, economic, and social imbalances of Latin America. The break in US-Panamanian relations over an incident in the Canal zone prepared me for a more serious crisis in Egypt, when my family had to be evacuated, our Consulate General in Alexandria was burned down, and my personal safety was endangered.

Athens offered a respite, a place to recharge energies following the mass exodus of foreign service personnel from the Near East in 1967. London offered peace and many amenities for a foreign service family.

In Hermosillo, Mexico, I learned to become an effective consular officer. But it was during my assignment in Halifax, Canada, that I became attuned to the protocol of the Service as I socially mingled with chiefs of mission, Canadian officials, and other diplomats on a regular basis.

My assignment in the State Department, in Washington, DC, exposed me to interaction between the Public Affairs Press Office and the Secretariat, and between the Office of Cultural Affairs and Educational Exchanges (CU/ARA) and its political desk officer counterparts. The job in the Visa office trained me in Congressional interest inquiries.

During the period from 1977-1981 I held an important assignment in Belgium. This tense period led up to the end of the Cold War, which President Reagan and Vice President Bush helped bring about by keeping the Pershing missiles on the books for deployment in Western Europe, including Belgium. Political reporting and meeting Flemish political leaders became part of my consular job description. I was called upon to act as Consul General at interim for three months. It was a dynamic era for the North Atlantic Treaty

## Library of Congress

Organization (NATO) and the European Union (EU), while Western Europe was on the threshold of opening up to Eastern Europe.

As a Consul in Tijuana, I dealt with US-Mexico border problems of great proportions. The number of undocumented aliens from Mexico and Central America was increasing. Tijuana was one of the largest nonimmigrant visa issuance posts in Mexico, and its strategic location near San Diego made it fertile ground for investors in border industries (the maquiladores). It also became a site of heavy drug trafficking.

The positive side of being a consular officer in Tijuana was the constant cultural interchanges between the two Californias at a time when Mexico was undergoing rapid political and social changes.

Arnold Denys San Diego, California 1997

### CHAPTER I

#### A Crisis in the Life of a Foreign Service Officer

Midmorning on June 6, 1967, a shouting, angry mob of Egyptian men and boys attacked our Consulate General in Alexandria, Egypt, soon putting it to fire. The British Consul called me in my ground floor office and said their Consulate had been ransacked and we were next. I had Egyptian visitors in my office, parents of an Egyptian-American doctor who had been killed in a car accident in Detroit. They needed a power of attorney to settle their son's estate. Warned of the imminent break-in I escorted them out of the building.

Moments later the hostile attackers pushed through the front gate, overwhelming the security guards posted there. Immediately we were prisoners, along with the Consul General and other staff members who had taken refuge in the vault area upstairs.

The Consul General had instructed me to stay in my downstairs office in case any American citizens needed assistance. I was on the front line and the only foreign service

## Library of Congress

officer on the ground floor when the mob entered, except for Dr. Hixon, an aid officer also in his office.

The rowdy crowd threw molotov cocktails in the lobby and adjacent offices. In seconds they invaded my office, grabbed me by the neck, shouting anti-American obscenities. My heart raced in fear but fortunately, Mohammed, a foreign service national employee who had hidden, rushed to my rescue and pulled the aggressors away from me. He begged them for mercy, pleading, "He is the father of a small child!"

It took long minutes before Mohammed persuaded them not to harm me and masterminded our escape through an office window. He helped me and Dr. Hixon jump into the rear garden. There another mob had set fire to our Consulate and personal vehicles. I owed Mohammed my life.

We soon learned that the crowd who destroyed our Consulate went on to raze the United States Information Service (USIS) Jefferson Library, one of our prize properties in Egypt where Egyptian students took English classes and where I taught English part time. This destruction was a job of professional rioters.

About two hours later Egyptian security forces offered some help. As we wondered what had happened to those in the vault the Consul General and American staff arrived in the garden. It was a relief when Egyptian security forces finally took us all in a van to police headquarters.

The Consul General told us to return to our homes and prepare for an immediate evacuation from the city. He said, "I've communicated with our Embassy in Cairo. We are to plan for evacuation to Athens in a few days. You have two hours to pack bare essentials."

At my apartment I was so traumatized by the mob attack that I did not know what to pack first. I made sure I had my passport and some clothing. Fearful of more violence I rushed

## Library of Congress

to the main lobby of the apartment building and waited for a car to pick me up. The Consul General had called us into his ransacked office, looking shaken as did we all, but he spoke firmly, reassuring us that everything was being done to get us out of the city when it was dark. "I've made a firm protest to the Egyptian authorities," he said, "at the cruel treatment of our foreign service personnel at the hands of the mob and the destruction of US government property."

Around 6:30 p.m. we, the American staff, were inconspicuously taken from our homes to the Palestine Hotel outside of Alexandria where we would be safer. We were confined to one large room of the hotel in order to avoid contact with other hotel guests. We continued to hear the sounds of the nightly air raid. We were also bombarded by loud radio news broadcasts and anti-American statements by President Nasser in his effort to influence the Arab public against the United States. It had an inflammatory effect on the burning of many foreign service posts in the Middle East.

June 9, the Egyptian police escorted us by bus to the Port of Alexandria where we boarded the Greek ship, Carina, and joined 600 other American evacuees from the area. A three-day grueling experience followed, crossing to Athens. Overcrowded cabins had little ventilation and we set foot on Greek soil with relief. The first rumors informed us we would be returned to our posts once the dust had settled. This was never to be.

I felt sad that I was unable to say goodbye to my local Egyptian staff, friends and students in Alexandria. Later, while I was working at the Athens Embassy, I received a letter from one of my students, Ibrahim, who hoped I would someday return to Alexandria.

## CHAPTER II My Beginnings

When I first visited the US Consulate General in Antwerp, in October 1950, to get my immigrant visa for the United States, I never realized that one day I would return there as a US Consul and Acting Consul General.



## Library of Congress

My life story begins in Flanders and shows the challenges of becoming a United States citizen following World War II. My immigrant experience and efforts in the US Foreign Service reflect an immigrant's struggle and difficulties to join the foreign service. My story, I believe, is unique, and may inspire others to reach for satisfying careers. In 1950, it was not easy for a European immigrant to reach such goals, but in America much is attainable — if not without personal sacrifice.

I was born in Varsenare, a small farming town eight miles from the medieval city of Bruges, West Flanders, on March 6, 1931. At that time it was inhabited by farmers and landlords belonging to the Flemish aristocracy. The farmers of Varsenare would go with their horse and buggy to the Bruges central market to sell their products each Saturday. Economic conditions in Belgium in the 1930's were fairly normal considering that the country was still recuperating from World War I — partly fought on Belgian territory.

My father, Emiel, was born in Ressegem, on April 30, 1903. He worked in his father's grain business in Varsenare. My paternal grandparents, Charles Denys and Judith De Fleur, grew up in East Flanders but moved to Varsenare to make a better living for my father, his brother, Gaston, and sister, Adrienne.

My mother, Godelieve Dobbelaere, born March 6, 1909, was the second of five daughters of Alois Dobbelaere and Irma De Ruwe. My maternal grandparents had a farm in Varsenare. Three of their daughters, Martha, Clara, and Maria, entered the Convent of the Sisters of Heule, West Flanders, and my mother and her sister, Anna, married at an early age to enter business. As a result, my grandparents retired early from the farm, having no sons to continue the heritage.

Following my early childhood in Varsenare, my parents moved to St. Andries (St. Andrew), a town near Bruges, to start their own grain business. They bought a nice home, which was called Sparrebosch (Forest of Pines). I went to kindergarten and primary school with the Sisters in St. Andrew. My parents later enrolled me at St. Francis Xavier Catholic High

## Library of Congress

School, in Bruges. At this school discipline was the order of the day. I believe those years served to discipline me for later intellectual pursuits.

In 1940, German armies invaded Holland, Belgium and Luxembourg without warning. My father served in the Belgian Army, but the campaign against the Germans in Belgium did not last long. In May, the Belgian Army was not prepared to hold on against the Nazi might. On May 26, Belgian armies disorganized and, a shortage of supplies forced King Leopold III to surrender. The German invasion of Belgium and the occupation put us in constant fear for our personal safety.

I was brought up in Flemish, the language spoken in northern Belgium. Belgium has two national languages: Flemish and French. Flemish is like Dutch, the official language of the Netherlands, which occupied Belgium until 1830, the date of Belgian independence. The history of the two languages in Belgium has many political overtones.

The Flemish people used to be the “underdog,” while the French speaking Walloons of Brussels and southern Belgium controlled the important jobs in government, diplomacy, and business. Hence the creation of the Flemish movement following World War I, in which many Flemish soldiers died. Subsequent political battles by Flemish leaders gained linguistic and political equality.

When my parents attended secondary schools in Belgium the primary language was French. That changed, however, when the University of Ghent was founded as a Flemish University. I was taught in Flemish and we studied French as a second language.

Although the Flemish population constitutes 60 percent of the Belgian population (10 million inhabitants in Belgium), French continues to dominate areas of power in government. Thus my father sent me to Revigny sur Meuse, France, for two summers to live with friends, the Henri Payard family, where I learned French fluently. Although the Flemings have gained political power, it is not unusual that some are not fluent in French. Some in Wallonia are reluctant to master the Flemish language. French was always the

## Library of Congress

language at the royal court in Brussels. Now the King addresses the nation in the two national languages. Today the two languages are indispensable to achieving success.

Belgium has been affected by political disturbances and is now becoming a miniature of great political and cultural diversity, positioned at the center of Europe and the European Union. I was fortunate to be brought up speaking both Flemish and French in that my curiosity for other languages and cultures was enriched. The more languages one knows the greater one's ability to mix in cultural and political circles.

When my father returned home he continued his grain business but refused to work for the occupying Germans, even though he could have made big profits. Some Flemish businessmen accepted the opportunity to put their business under German supervision. My parents were very anti-Nazi and sympathetic to the Allied cause. When US and Canadian forces liberated Belgium in August, 1944, many reprisals took place against persons who had collaborated with the Germans and benefited from the German Occupation.

I remember sitting in the living room at night listening for news of liberation on the BBC radio station. From time to time German soldiers would make rounds in the neighborhood. We could hear their heavy boots. They would listen at the windows and sometimes they would ring the doorbell and come in to see if anything suspicious was going on. Many times neighbors were taken away for questioning at the local Gestapo station.

Since my father had a small grain business we always had enough bread and other necessities. Luxuries such as coffee were rationed. My father's grain business had its ups and downs. We survived the bombings around Bruges. The city was spared destruction, it was said, because of the Allies' appreciation for the city's art. They never bombed the inner city, but we had air raids almost continuously. As the sirens stopped and started, we were constantly opening and closing the windows. Some chateaux, which the Germans had occupied in the suburbs of Bruges, were bombed by Allied planes. We often

## Library of Congress

found shrapnel in our garden. One day a large, heavy piece hit the hothouse where my grandfather was working, nearly killing him.

My adolescent life was very much affected by the German occupation. I often had to stay at home. We had to dim our lights early, a standard procedure during the war. I often liked to ride my bicycle. When an air raid occurred I had to jump, with my bike, into the nearest ditch. Sometimes planes flew directly overhead as they searched the main roads. Some of the Underground people were killed by the Germans near Bruges. Our only hope in Flanders was that the Allied troops would someday liberate us. Our link with the outside world was Radio Free London, from which we had messages of hope and eventual liberation.

Bruges, one of the oldest medieval cities in Europe, is the capital of the province of West Flanders, often referred to as “the Venice of the North,” because of its canals and moats. It is still one of Europe's favorite tourist sites. Henry Adams, in his book *Chartres and St. Michel*, wrote, “Bruges is indeed a monument of Christian past and an inspiration for generations of tomorrow, of unity, faith, Catholic fervor, its chivalry and dynamicity of purpose. Bruges is a city of various dimensions filled with mystical beauty of historic times, which are devoted to art, paintings, shrines to Our Lady, and solace for its people.”

In retrospect, I see Bruges as an anchor in my busy life. I always refer to it as the cultural background of my childhood. In later years I would always return to Bruges to visit family and friends, and to reacquaint myself with its primitive paintings — those of Memlinck and the Van Eyck brothers. It was this early influence, I believe, that developed my love of art, and my life in the Foreign Service offered countless opportunities to pursue that passion.

The war years brought confusion and uncertainty for my future. After the war, an unexpected visit to relatives in Belgium by my maternal great-uncle, Remie De Ruwe, of Walla Walla, Washington, opened new horizons for me. During his visit to Flanders he inquired about my future and offered me an opportunity to study in the United States

## Library of Congress

At that time it was unusual for a young student to travel alone to the United States. My uncle had warned me with his nostalgia for the homeland and his struggles as an immigrant. His visit to his homeland changed my destiny. I was determined to follow my uncle's advice: to learn English well, to get a job, and to discover the New World. My parents reluctantly supported me in these plans. I was their only child and it was not easy for them to let go. My Uncle Remie sponsored me and I was thus able to receive an immigrant visa at the Consulate General in Antwerp.

On October 13, 1950, I sailed on the SS Washington from Le Havre, France, for my first transatlantic voyage. Although my parents accompanied me to the French port, it was a sad departure and not without difficulties. Special immigration inspectors were on board ship and they questioned every immigrant prior to departure on his or her political views. This was the beginning of the McCarthy era in the US (named after Senator Joseph McCarthy, of Wisconsin), when many foreigners and intellectuals were suspected of having communist sympathies.

My crossing of the North Atlantic lasted about ten days. Rough seas, little English, and feelings of insecurity made it a difficult journey. I was happy to arrive in New York and, with other immigrants, went on deck to look for the Statue of Liberty, which means so much to any newcomer to America. It was a deeply spiritual experience. I also had a view of the massive skyscrapers of New York. It was an overwhelming sight of power and grandeur.

My father had given me \$150 for the train trip from New York to Spokane, Washington. That part of the journey was exciting. The overwhelming cities of New York and Chicago, the skyscrapers and the wide open spaces made me homesick for my native Flanders and my emotionally secure, sheltered life. My uncle had been right to warn me of culture shock and personal sacrifices I would endure. The four day trip by train (without sleeper) caused me to contract a boil which went untreated until I arrived in Spokane with Great-Uncle Felix and Aunt Anna.

## Library of Congress

Everything was different in America. I understood only a few words of English. I noticed that people seemed to act more efficiently, but they were also kinder than people back home. The first days and months in the Northwest were the most difficult one of my immigrant experience. I tried hard to mix socially with my family and friends. I felt torn away from my own family roots in Flanders, and that what I had left behind would never be able to be filled with experiences of my new American life. Although people in America showed me hospitality and optimism, I longed for the familiar family roots of my native Belgium. But as I made progress in English my cultural assimilation improved. The contrast between my relatively protected adolescent years in Flanders and my new existence in the Far West was dramatic. It took about two years before I began to appreciate my new life in the United States, as I tried to make the crossover from the European ways of living to the American ways of doing things.

My uncles Remie, Felix, and Jules De Ruwe were the brothers of my maternal grandmother, who first emigrated from Flanders to the great Northwest in the beginning of the century. The De Ruwe family prospered in farming, but did not escape the financial ravages of the 1930s depression. They were hard workers and survivors. They were my family roots in the New World and my models, giving me the impetus to succeed.

My educational discovery of America would take many years. From Spokane my relatives drove me to Walla Walla, Washington, an affluent, middle class town , and the home of Whitman College, which would be my first home in the United States.

Uncle Remie and Aunt Caroline welcomed me into their home. He made it clear that learning English would be my first priority and enrolled me at Walla Walla Business College to learn English and bookkeeping. I learned practical American English usage, a painful but necessary study.

## Library of Congress

Although I had free room and board with my uncle, he encouraged me to look for a part-time job. He wanted me to be on my own and independent. Soon I found a job that did not require much English- I washed dishes in a local supermarket bakery for a few months.

My five months in Walla Walla taught me something of the American way of life. It became obvious to me that staying at my Uncle's home, with all its amenities, could not continue forever. In March, he suggested that I enroll at Gonzaga University in Spokane, Washington. Gonzaga had acquired some fame because of one of its alumni, singer Bing Crosby. My uncle accompanied me to the Jesuit College and paid my first semester tuition fees. He had made the first investment in my American education. But, as we said goodbye, he stated that I now would be on my own. This was the best gift he ever gave me. For the first time in my life I would have to be independent and self reliant.

At Gonzaga University I began to grow intellectually. I enjoyed becoming involved in freshman activities. My Uncle's move to enroll me at Gonzaga and my interest in university education changed the course of my life. He told me that my future, without a college degree, would be hard. Gonzaga University offered just that challenge.

The university had only a handful of foreign students; I was active in the French Club, which fostered many cultural events. The French Club became a forum for my speeches on life in Belgium during and after World War II. I spoke at clubs throughout the Spokane area. Foreign students were in demand at churches, and social and Chamber of Commerce meetings. This period in America, the early 1950s, was unique for its great interest in life in Europe, and in its new arrivals — foreign students. My proficiency in English improved daily, and I volunteered my free time for speaking events.

Father Robert Schiffner, S. J., Dean of the Foreign Languages Department, took an interest in me and advised me on my course work, became my mentor in early 1951. I was a regular Sunday dinner guest at his parents' home. Father Schiffner was an inspirational, charismatic figure at Gonzaga, and was one of the first professors who instilled in me the

## Library of Congress

possibilities of work in the diplomatic service. I knew this would be a long, hard road for a Belgian foreign student. He became my confidant and encouraged my activities in the French Club, to which I was elected President. This began a chain of events which helped me to seek managerial responsibilities.

Father Schiffner was eventually sent as a guest to the Sorbonne, in Paris, to do language research, and was received at the Paris City Hall as a representative of the Mayor of Spokane at the anniversary of the founding of Paris. He also visited my parents in Bruges. We kept in close contact. I continued courses in economics, history and philosophy, and obtained average grades because English was still a barrier.

In May, 1952, I finished my freshman year at Gonzaga. I had already secured a part-time job doing filing at a local shipping firm and I had begun teaching French on a tutorial basis. Abbie Miller was one of my first students. Her mother, Beatrice, became a good friend of mine. She was from the East Coast and became another mentor. She gave me guidance and insight into the intellectual world of the United States.

After Father Schiffner had left for Europe, Father Clement Regimbal, Dean of the College, took me under his wing and first spoke to me of the Georgetown University School of Foreign Service. It would be an oversimplification to say that I had decided to become a diplomat at Gonzaga, but Father Regimbal was instrumental in recommending my transfer to Georgetown. He thought I would make a worthy applicant.

Before this transfer took place I had been weighing other options, such as foreign business, teaching, even entering the Jesuit seminary (something my parents discouraged). I knew, however, that the few talents I had should be dedicated to an ideological cause. There was, in me, a feeling of doing some work that would benefit my newly-adopted country.



## Library of Congress

Although I returned to Belgium for a visit in September, 1952, after a two month summer stint at the Kaiser Aluminum factory, in Spokane, I had already decided to make America my permanent home.

My foreign language background and diligence were assets that helped me to enter Georgetown and to eventually choose a foreign service career.

Although Bruges had survived the German occupation, my father's business had not fared so well. There were larger grain businesses that sprouted immediately after the war, and it was difficult to compete. The only lucrative part of his business was the cultivation of seeds. My father had several travel agents who sold seeds in grocery shops. Most Flemish people had their own plot of land to grow vegetables during the difficult war years. I advised my parents to join me in the United States. I was full of enthusiasm about the economic opportunities in the US. The 1950s were fairly good years in America, and anyone with initiative could make a living. However, my parents spoke no English and had firm roots in Flanders. To uproot them would have been traumatic, to say the least. They did, surprisingly, make a decision in June of 1953, to sell their business and emigrate to the United States. Of course, they had my full moral support.

During my vacation I reacquainted myself with life in Bruges. The mayor of Bruges, V. Van Hoestenbergh, invited me to his home and to City Hall. He had read about my trip to America. I was the bearer of a congratulatory letter to him from Spokane Mayor Meehan, in which he expressed admiration to the Belgian people for their independence and their resistance against Nazism. He also spoke of the valor of the Flemish people, and mentioned the Battle of the Spurs (July 11, 1302) in Courtrai (Flanders), where the Flemings defeated the French.

At that time, my father sent me to Rome. His friend, Father Johannes Maria Van Gelder, of the Order of the Franciscan Monks, worked at the "Propagation of the Faith" in Vatican City. This was one of the high moments of my travels. Father Van Gelder had arranged

## Library of Congress

for me to see Pope Pius XII at a papal audience in St. Peter's Cathedral. He arranged lodging for me in Rome with the G. Brezza family, who showed me all the historic points of interest. Father Van Gelder became a good friend and advisor. In letters, he encouraged me to open the doors of education and to explore the fields of languages and diplomacy. He was the most vocal sponsor of my study in Washington, DC

In January, 1953, I was a guest speaker at the Bruges Rotary Club, and told of my experience as a student in the United States. In Europe, I found great interest in the United States, both socially, economically and politically.

Following the end of World War II and the advent of the Marshall Plan (in 1948 by President Truman), aiding Western Europe and its reconstruction, many people looked to America as a beacon of hope and opportunity. This is still the case today, but from a different perspective. Many Belgians want to visit the United States, study at our schools and universities, and invest in business ventures. The evolution of 50 years of US-European relations has led to many changes. The economic renaissance in Western Europe, the impetus of a United Europe, and the creation of the European Common Market (EEC), together with NATO's military umbrella to guarantee Western security, has led to the demise of the former Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) and the fall of the Berlin Wall. Hence the end of the Cold War as we knew it. Belgium is now the political and international seat of the European Union and the headquarters of NATO. Belgium has continued to play a vital role of political neutrality and has welcomed many political refugees.

Before I left for Washington, DC I met Henri Brugmans, Rector of the College of Europe, in Bruges, and the Dutch Consul in Bruges, Mr. Liebrechts. They were forward-looking on European unity. This college is still a great academic center which attracts graduate students from abroad to study policies of European unity. Consul Liebrechts told me how important it would be for me, as a student of diplomacy, to understand the formation and implications of American foreign policies.

## Library of Congress

### Georgetown University

In January, 1953, I sailed on the S.S. United States, the first transatlantic liner to cross the Atlantic in four and a half days, and arrived in the nation's capital in time to begin the spring semester at Georgetown University School of Foreign Service. I took a taxi from Union Station to Georgetown and, for the first time, drove past the White House. A few weeks earlier President Dwight Eisenhower and Vice President Richard Nixon had been elected to lead the nation.

There was a feeling of tranquility in Washington, D. C., although the Cold War between the US. and the USSR had intensified and the Korean War had everyone worried. Would we have to face the Soviets or China in a nuclear confrontation? President Eisenhower gave us steady leadership and a sense of patriotism during the early Cold War period. Senator Joe McCarthy, of Wisconsin, was responsible for upsetting the Eisenhower years of peace by his anti-communist witch hunting tactics against members of the State Department and academia. President Eisenhower was able to ignore the Republican Senator and avoided a personal confrontation with him. Joe McCarthy ultimately killed his own ambition when he was censured by his peers in the US Senate.

Georgetown's Healy Building, where the School of Foreign Service (SFS) is located, exemplifies Flemish renaissance architecture. As Father Schiffner had been my mentor at Gonzaga, I now would become the protégé of Frank L. Fadner, S.J., Dean of the SFS. We became good friends even though there was always a respectful distance between teacher and student. I was fortunate to be able to rent a room on the Georgetown campus for almost four months. I knew I would not be able to stay there for long given the high cost of tuition. I began looking for a job immediately. The University Placement Office found a job for me as a banking clerk at the McLachlen Banking Corporation, on 10th and G Streets, in downtown Washington, DC This would permit me to attend evening school. It was a lifesaver. It was a clerical job and I also performed the duties of messenger. I had to go every day to a banking clearing house with pouches to exchange with other banks in

## Library of Congress

the city. I learned a lot of banking procedures. Bank Vice President Elizabeth Brotherhood showed interest in my academic work and proved to be an excellent supervisor and friend. Dorothy Jones, a long time employee of the bank, and resident of Virginia, was helpful and taught me many aspects of Virginia and Southern culture.

William L. Battle was another gentleman and resident in Dupont Circle who befriended me. He was interested in learning French. I offered my services as a tutor. Mr. Battle worked for the Treasury Department and was able to give me many insights into government service.

Georgetown University, unlike Gonzaga, was a more formal school for affluent students. The School of Foreign Service had many foreign students from Central and South America and Asia, with a few from Western Europe. Many of the Latin American students belonged to powerful political families. I knew that I would have to work hard to keep up with the pace. Many of the students did not have to work for a living and could enjoy some of the social amenities of Washington.

The School of Foreign Service was founded by Father Edmund A. Walsh, S.J., in 1919. He was a prominent Jesuit and geopolitical teacher who advised President Franklin D. Roosevelt during World War II. Father Walsh put the School of Foreign Service on the world map as a training school for future US diplomats and international commerce. I had read Father Walsh's books, *Total Power* and *Total Empire*. He encouraged special scholastic training in other fields, including international economic policies. These influences continued to reinforce a desire to prepare for a foreign service career.

At Georgetown I was exposed to an intellectual giant in Father Frank Fadner. He was from Wisconsin and had studied at the London School of Economics. He was an expert in Russian history, an exceptional polylinguist and an accomplished painter. Father Fadner taught history at Georgetown from 1949 to 1978 and served as the School of Foreign Service Regent.

## Library of Congress

Dr. Carroll Quigley was my professor of history. His course on the Development of Civilization captivated students. He taught us to analyze historical evolution and the rise and fall of civilizations. Many of us did not always pass his quizzes, but he proved to be a disciplined thinker with historic vision.

Dr. Jules Davids was my professor of American diplomatic history, and made us focus on some of the more dramatic developments in American history. Later on I learned that he had helped John F. Kennedy with his book *Profiles in Courage*.

It would be an omission not to mention Professor Walter I. Giles. His course on Constitutional Law was basic and challenging.

My university education at Georgetown was an exercise in scholastic discipline. No course was more evident of this than Frank Fadner's treatise on Czarist and Communist Russia. Every student at the SFS knew beforehand that no degree was possible without passing this course. His lectures were intense, impressive and detailed. I remember him stating that the Russian Revolution of 1917 was not completed. In view of the political events in the former USSR and Eastern Europe since 1989, and attempts to reform Russia, his predictions have come true.

My degree became my main goal. Two fellow foreign students, Giuliano Teodori, from Italy, and Choung Il Chee, from South Korea, shared my ambition. William Anderson, a close friend and classmate in Russian history, chose the field of accounting and later served in Germany as Attach# for the General Accounting Office (GAO). Choung returned to his native South Korea to become a professor of international law. Giuliano ended up as Vice President of the Chicago First National Bank, in Milan, Italy. Foreign students at Georgetown, like me, became interested in the general field of international relations. Some chose the diplomatic service while others joined international firms. Although Georgetown counts many distinguished alumni and visiting professors among their ranks, such as President William Clinton (SFS 1968), Ambassadors Madeleine Albright and

## Library of Congress

Jeane Kirkpatrick, many US diplomats today come from a diversity of American colleges and universities. Georgetown, however, was, and is, unequaled because of its scholastic tradition and location in the nation's capital, where exposure to US government institutions and the Library of Congress is unique for research and observation.

### The Frick Family

In 1954, my parents settled in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. This would become my home in the United States until 1973. It was difficult for my father, a former grain businessman in Flanders, who had emigrated here at age 50, to secure a suitable job.

On Easter weekend, 1954, luck was on my side during a quick bus trip to New York City. I wanted to know more about the city and some of the sights, including the Frick Collection on 70th Street and Fifth Avenue. It is one of the most famous museums in the United States because of its fine classical paintings and excellent reference library. At that time I was still working at the bank, where my supervisor, Elizabeth Brotherhood, and I often exchanged ideas on art and US-European culture. Upon my return I told her that my sightseeing bus had stopped at the Frick Collection and that I had been quite impressed by its fine European art works. She was surprised and said that she had just met Miss Helen Clay Frick, whose father, Henry Clay Frick, a prominent coke baron and manager of Andrew Carnegie's Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania steel empire, had bequeathed this art gallery to the City of New York. She said that Miss Frick was looking for an experienced, reliable couple to work as managing caretakers for her family home in Pittsburgh. She had expressed a preference for persons with a European cultural background.

As Elizabeth and I talked in the office about this it occurred to her that my parents were looking for employment and that Miss Frick was looking for people with their special qualifications. For me it was a dream come true.

Mrs. Brotherhood already had some details on file regarding my parents. She elaborated on this and knew that the selection process for candidates had started and that Miss

## Library of Congress

Frick's requirements were quite high. Although my parents' English was still halting their business experience and cultural background of Bruges would help them to be considered as candidates for this position. Before talking to my parents about the idea I gave her permission to make inquiries with the National Trust for Historic Preservation, in Washington, DC, an organization that supervises all US historic buildings, to see if my family could apply. Elizabeth was instrumental in expediting this process and arranged a meeting with Director Rath, of the National Trust for Historic Preservation, which was then located in one of the 18th century townhouses in Lafayette Park, across the street from the White House.

The initial interview went well but the director told my parents that a second interview would take place at the Frick Building by Director Walter Cooley, in Pittsburgh. A few days later I accompanied my parents on the train trip to Pittsburgh. I was present at the Frick Building meeting when they were selected for the job. My parents moved to "Clayton" (Frick Estate) in Pittsburgh in April, 1954, and stayed until the summer of 1973.

Miss Helen Clay Frick lived in Pride's Crossing, Massachusetts, and returned to her family estate in Pittsburgh once a year during November. During my parents' stay in Pittsburgh plans were made by Miss Frick to preserve the Victorian home and eventually to open it as a private museum. This historic event took place on September 23, 1990, at a gala opening of "Clayton" to the public, to which I received an invitation. Besides the Frick Collection in New York there is the Frick Art Museum on the Frick Estate in Homewood, which opened on October 21, 1970.

Prior to these major projects Miss Frick had built the Henry Clay Frick Fine Arts Building in Schenley Plaza, at the University of Pittsburgh, in which the Nicholas Lochoff Cloister was completed in 1965. It was a project inspired by the Florentine Renaissance.

My family's connection with the Frick family and various art events fascinated me. I used to spend vacations at "Clayton" as a student, and later, as a Foreign Service Officer on

## Library of Congress

home leave. I became interested in the development and history of European paintings and European art in the US. Henry Clay Frick was responsible for bringing European works of art to his collection in New York, and his daughter, Helen Clay Frick, because of her love for European paintings, inherited her father's appreciation and taste for European art. She dedicated her life to improving the Frick collection in New York and completed her lifetime dream of preserving "Clayton" as a historic Victorian home.

These were educational years for me, during which I developed a keen appreciation for art, particularly Flemish art works of my native Belgium. My personal contacts with Miss Frick and accompanying her to the Museums of Primitive Paintings in Bruges and Ghent, in the summer of 1957, left me with a lasting interest in European art and classical paintings.

### CHAPTER III US Citizenship

During my senior year at Georgetown University I became a US citizen on December 13, 1955, at a ceremony at the Federal Court House in Washington, D. C, followed by a reception at the "Daughters of the American Revolution." I began to realize how much I owed to my newly adopted land. My Georgetown experience and continued travel in the United States and Europe would enhance my plans to join the US Foreign Service.

When I graduated in February, 1956, that would have been the ideal time to start my diplomatic career. However, my plans had to be shelved for a few years because State Department personnel regulations did not permit naturalized citizens to join the Foreign Service until they had completed five years as a US citizen. Since I had a deferment from the US Army to finish college in 1956 I still had a two year stint to do in the Service.

Following graduation, I returned to Pittsburgh to work as an investigator for Retail Credit Company of Atlanta, Georgia (now Equifax Services). I used to prepare insurance, credit and personnel background reports for major insurance companies. It was not a



## Library of Congress

challenging job but I developed some business skills. In the evenings I took graduate courses at the University of Pittsburgh in political science, and Japanese government.

### Service in the US Army

I was drafted into the US Army in May, 1956. I made up my mind to make the best of my two years in the Service. After basic training at Fort Dix, New Jersey, I was assigned to Le Verdon, Gironde, France, to work as a French interpreter for the Command of the 15th Transportation Company. With one thousand other GIs I boarded the SS Hodges (a military transport vessel on which we shipped out) and set sail from New York harbor to Bremerhaven, Germany. It took us nearly two weeks, including a stop at the port of Casablanca for a few hours. This introduced me to Arab culture in North Africa, with men dressed in white robes, thousands of white Mediterranean villas, and wild shouting of natives back and forth in the port area. We docked in Casablanca to let US Navy personnel debark to proceed to their US military bases in Morocco.

On board ship I worked in the newsroom of the "ocean newspaper," which was one of the most interesting parts of the ship. I helped the editor, Jim Wilden, keep the paper in touch with international developments, including the landslide reelection of Dwight D. Eisenhower in 1956. Armed Forces Radio Atlantic, and The Stars and Stripes newspaper kept us abreast of world events. President Eisenhower, who had commanded the Allied Forces and led us to victory against the Germans, was more of a diplomat than a politician. This had served him well in his bid for the presidency. He spoke of building a new Republican party. The Eisenhower years (1952-1961) led to moderate presidential teams of Nixon-Ford and Reagan-Bush.

Because of the German occupation of my native Belgium I had never visited Germany. When we docked at Bremerhaven, it was the first time I had set foot on German soil. The US Army train took us through a great part of Germany, where I saw the rapid reconstruction being done in West Germany. President Truman's Marshall Plan was

## Library of Congress

responsible for this. Although European cities looked gloomier in the aftermath of war, the many gothic and Romanesque churches I saw remained symbols of Europe's historic and grand past.

Our Army garrison was located in Le Verdon sur Mer, a beautiful spread of pine woods and sandy beaches, 100 kilometers from Bordeaux, in southwestern France. It is believed that Marquis Marie Joseph Lafayette set out from there for the New World. It was at the other juncture of the Gironde River, near Royan, a city which was one of the last victims of the air raids upon the German retreat from Bordeaux. The city suffered much damage, but did a good job reconstructing it.

### An Interpreter in the US Army

Our military installation was under the central command of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), which was still located in Paris. Not until French President Charles de Gaulle came back to power and severed relations with NATO did the alliance move its headquarters to Brussels, where it remains today.

If our army living quarters in the woods were primitive, the healthy outdoors and an occasional escape to the city of Bordeaux made it interesting. From time to time I went to Bordeaux, a city famous for its good restaurants and wines. Since I spoke French fluently, I had many friends who wanted to join me on visits to sites such as the Cathedral of Saint Andrew, the Grand Theater, and the port area. Later on, I worked with Don Wahl, in the Base Library, which made the job more stimulating. I spent many hours browsing through history and biographic sections.

I arrived in France at the height of the Suez crisis, when Egyptian President Gamal Abdel Nasser had nationalized the Suez Canal. To avoid a showdown between France and England, President Eisenhower intervened to stabilize the geopolitical situation in the Middle East against the Soviet Union's ambitions in that area. This action was not popular in France. Russia had always sought an outlet to the Black Sea, and I would not have

## Library of Congress

believed, when I was in the US Army in France in 1956-58, that Communist Russia would eventually collapse, set another political vivendi, and that we would be the last GIs to serve in France. With the rise in power of General Charles de Gaulle, many things would change.

The commanding officer of the 15th Transportation Company was Lt. Colonel Charles McCallum. He was an able and considerate officer. He was aware of the delicate line between military security in Europe and diplomacy with French officials. As his French interpreter I quickly learned quickly how to deal with his French hosts. He also trusted in my judgment and knowledge of European customs and education.

### NODEX Operations

Our 15th Transport Command's main target was to test the beaches in northern France in case it became necessary to conduct another Allied invasion. These offshore discharge exercises were referred to as NODEX Operations. We worked on the beaches in Royan, Gironde, and Sarzeau, Morbihan. We also explored the port area of Saint Nazaire and La Turballe.

Wherever we went we set up our own bivouac. Our soldiers lived, as it were, side by side with the French natives. It was customary for us to invite notables of neighboring towns to visit our Battalion headquarters and give them a chance to see how we lived and worked. They would share meals with us in the officer's mess hall. I was often asked to set up such meetings. Local mayors, prefects (civilian administrator of a French department), police officials, and school directors were always invited to get acquainted with our military encampment and GIs.

As American interpreter I was often invited by French officials. One such outing was on April 4, 1957, when I was guest at a dinner party given by Michel Denieul, Chief of the Cabinet of the Prefecture of Vannes, Morbihan. Also invited were Captain Carter, M.D.,

## Library of Congress

and Lt. Colonel Phinaert. We compared social life and education in France and the United States.

I often visited Vannes, seat of the Department of Morbihan, because our transport discharge training took place at the Suscinio Beach, near the historic castle where Anne of Brittany had reigned. The French press covered the display of machinery, cranes, tug boats, and our courageous men. Members of the French Army Reserves, public schools, and clergy, also attended these exercises.

When General Charles de Gaulle broke his military ties with NATO in the 1960s and announced that he would staff his own "Force de Frappe" (independent rapid attack) program, it was not a popular move. Many people in the French provinces wanted to keep US forces in France. They felt the need for preparedness in order to avoid World War III, and felt secure with our presence. As we moved with our trucks from beach to beach, I established a liaison with local town officials and port authorities. As this occurred on our move to La Turballe (near Le Croisic, 45 km from St. Nazaire), we looked for Captain Deschamps, of the Marine (Navy) Office of Lorient.

### European Travel

I needed a few days off and decided to travel by train with my friend from Rutgers College, Ted Faison, to see Spain and Portugal. They were very different from northern European countries. I was impressed by the virgin land and the vast agricultural areas, labored by human hands and fertilized by natural means. Very few places were mechanized at that time.

In Portugal, Antonio Salazar had held the reins of power since 1928. The Portuguese respected him as much as they do our Lady of Fatima. We first went to Fatima by bus from Lisbon to visit the Shrine of Our Lady at Cova del Rio. There we saw the Basilica where Our Lady allegedly appeared to Lucia, Francisco and Jacinta. I could not help but wonder why Our Lady would appear there in 1917, when the Russian Revolution was

## Library of Congress

taking place and when Portugal was experiencing a stagnant economy and indifference towards religion. Why did Our Lady choose to appear in this land, and leave a message to young children, ill-instructed, and unaware of the world's problems?

Spain and Portugal were the mother countries of two great colonial empires in the New World. Brazil is now a vibrant developing country and the nations of Central, South America and the Caribbean have all been influenced by Spanish religion, culture and language. In this century the United States has received many immigrants from Cuba, Puerto Rico, Central America and Mexico. Latin Americans are constantly on the move. So are Asians and refugees from former Republics of USSR and countries in Eastern Europe. But no immigration has been more dynamic than the Latin American flux. This has already had an effect on our economic and social way of life in the United States. Up to World War II, English was the primary language in the United States and in the world. We in the United States have never had to learn another foreign language. The dynamics and drive of immigrants is now changing this cultural-linguistic panorama in our country. Spanish is infiltrating our public schools, and international trade has promoted the idea of offering foreign language studies, such as Spanish, Tagalog, Vietnamese, and Japanese, at schools. Prior to World War II most immigrants came from Europe. This created a homogeneous culture. Now we are faced with more diverse cultures and our nation is headed for a multicultural setup. Hispanic immigration is now changing the linguistic-cultural panorama in California, Florida, New York, Texas and Illinois. This has created a need to promote bilingual education. It is an awesome responsibility and challenge for educators and government leaders.

From Lisbon I remember the influence of Moorish architecture and the elegant restaurants. In Madrid we stayed at Vichy Residencia, on Avenida Jose Antonio. We spent a few hours at the Prado Museum and the Royal Palace. At American House, near the US Embassy, I talked with Foreign Service Officer Michael Carvajal, whom I had first met in Washington, D. C.

## Library of Congress

Before returning to military headquarters, Ted and I stopped in Nice and Lourdes. It was a twelve day tour that gave us "peace of soul."

On July 4, 1957, I was a personal guest of Mr. Mayorie, manager of the Rothschild Chateau in Pauillac. My friend, Mr. Aubertie, from Le Verdon, was with me too. This 80 hectares vineyard spread was an impressive site in the heart of the Medoc, one of France's richest red wine countries. The Baron de Rothschild family has been reputed for their collection of red wines. Former guests of this estate were Sir Alexander Fleming and Henry Ford. We were shown wine of 1918 and older. Every bottle is checked every 25 years, I was told.

Although my job as interpreter was a demanding one, I was able to take off now and then to travel. On July 30, 1957, I left by train to Paris to visit Vice Consul of Korea, Mr. Jean Limb, at the Korean Legation. He was a personal friend of my former Georgetown classmate, Choung Il Chee. Mr. Limb was already on his way up the ladder of the Korean Foreign Service. Over the years we kept in touch with each other and also with our mutual friend, Chee.

The more I traveled throughout Europe, the more I felt the need to gain knowledge of politics, culture and social conditions. My years as an interpreter in the US Army were ones of intellectual growth. After my visit with Mr. Limb, I boarded the Orient Express which took me through Switzerland and the beautiful Tyrol mountains in Austria. In 1955, Austria was still occupied by the Soviets. I talked with an Austrian monk who had been in a concentration camp in the Soviet Union. He loved the Russian people, but said that the Communist doctrine held many people captive in Soviet cities.

I was happy to be in Vienna. Although the city had been heavily damaged during the war, the inhabitants of Vienna had not lost their friendliness. Vienna is only 60 kilometers from the Hungarian border and the Iron Curtain. If Versailles is the jewel of France's past, Vienna represents the classical wealth of the former Austrian-Hungarian empire. Sites

## Library of Congress

such as the baroque Sch#nbrunn Palace (built by the baroque Austrian architect Fisher von Erlach, the Elder). St. Stephen's gothic cathedral, the Vienna Opera, and Parliament House are also great tourist attractions.

From Vienna I continued on the train to Munich. Its renaissance buildings have been rebuilt well. I stopped there to visit my friends from Spokane, Colonel and Mrs. Ernest Tabscott and their daughter, Jeanne. We had breakfast at the Regina Palace Hotel and reminisced about our student years at Gonzaga.

On the train from Munich to Copenhagen I enjoyed the rich agricultural landscape. In the Danish capital I found lodging on King's Square near the Royal Theater. I visited Christianborg Royal Palace. Tourists had to put on red slippers because the palace floors are in fine hazelnut and mahogany wood. In my opinion, it is one of the best kept palaces. The white Carrara marble from Florence and the red Italian marble from Verona were impressive. The walls were richly decorated with silk Lyon and Brussels tapestries.

There was no time to see more so I was off to Stockholm. The Swedish countryside, with its hills and lakes, reminded me of California. I next visited old Stockholm. The Bernadotte Gallery and Victorian Drawing Room of the Royal Palace were my favorite spots. In both Copenhagen and Stockholm there were many Protestant churches to visit, but the City Hall in Stockholm was the most elaborate structure of them all.

Sweden has a tradition of modern social welfare, which is reflected in their high standard of living: a social security safety net from birth to grave. The Swedes I talked to said that this semi-socialized system has not at all jeopardized the private market system. This phenomenon is debatable today as Scandinavian and other European countries are feeling the crunch of a too generous welfare system for all, with resulting public deficits and high unemployment for many. Many countries in Europe are reevaluating this social safety net and are beginning to realize that the balance has tilted too much. Hence some European voters have opted for more conservative governments, such as that of Margaret

## Library of Congress

Thatcher in the United Kingdom and Jacques Chirac in France. Social safety programs became very popular in the post World War II period in Western Europe, but political rhetoric was slowly shifting towards more private initiatives.

I returned to Belgium on August 7, adding a stop in Amsterdam, which, like Bruges, is a medieval city with canals and moats. Both were important commercial centers in the Middle Ages. Actually, New York was founded by Amsterdamers, and it was once called New Amsterdam.

I wanted to see some of Rembrandt's paintings in the house where the seventeenth century painter had lived. I found some peace in the Ryksmuseum, where I saw his masterpiece *The Nightwatch*. It is a gallery that has some similarities with the Mellon Museum in Washington, DC I was told that Rembrandt, who had introduced "light" into paintings, had reached perfection in his art. His *Self Portrait* and *The Polish Rider*, in the Frick Collection, are for us to treasure.

August 8, I visited Bruges. It was good to return to my native soil to recover my roots. It was an enriching, religious, spiritual and cultural experience which made me feel humble and better able to understand my own impulses. I stayed with family and visited with Father Damian of the Abbey of Zevenkerke, located near Varsenare. This monastery of Benedictine monks had served as a refuge for kings during World Wars I and II.

### Educated Travel with Miss Frick

My plans to be in Bruges coincided with Miss Frick's arrival in Ostend. She had asked if I would be her guide during her visit to Belgium and Ghent. From London she wired me, "I am looking forward to seeing Bruges through your eyes. Bruges will be the high point of my European trip."



## Library of Congress

I met Miss Frick at the ferry terminal in Ostend. This was not her first visit to Belgium. She had been in Bruges many times before with her father to study the art of the Flemish primitives.

To travel with Miss Frick was more than educative. The few years of my association with her was a training ground for later guided tours I gave to visiting diplomats. I learned to be comfortable in this role of guide and to appreciate the cultural advantages it offered. It was captivating to witness Miss Frick's enthusiasm and profound knowledge of Flemish and European art works. She would point out every detail to us. She was also a disciplined traveler. Her priorities were paintings, especially Flemish masters, and churches. From Miss Frick I quickly learned how to prepare for travel. She had read up on historic places beforehand and made extensive notes.

I arranged for Miss Frick's lodging at the Hotel Du Sablon, an old hotel on Noordzandstraat, Bruges. She asked me to stay for dinner and was pleased with the logistic plans I had made.

We began our tour on August 13 at the Memlinck Museum in Saint John's Hospital, followed by a visit to the Church of Our Lady to see the Madonna with Child sculpture by Michelangelo. This Italian art work was stolen during the German occupation in World War II but was later retrieved. I never found out why Miss Frick was not fond of Michelangelo but I learned in later years that she admired French sculptor Jean Antoine Houdon, creator of many works in the United States.

Miss Frick wanted to see where I had attended high school. I called Director Brother Lucien, of the St. Francis Xavier School in Bruges, to find out if we could see him. He received us in the Queen Astrid parlor (named after Belgian Queen Astrid, the charismatic monarch who was well beloved by her people), which I remembered from my early school years. Miss Frick was relieved that Brother Lucien spoke fluent English and was able to explain the history of his religious Order. He presented her with an 800 year-old piece of

## Library of Congress

pottery which had been found in the school's garden. When accepting this she said that it would be presented to the Denys family in Pittsburgh.

Miss Frick liked only classical art works. She liked Bruges, which had been preserved as a medieval town throughout the years, and modern buildings were not permitted. She abhorred modern architecture and art. When we entered the Holy Savior Cathedral she was quick to point out that the stained glass windows were beautiful, but that she preferred the gothic lines of the ornate Notre Dame (Church of Our Lady). In this respect she shared with her father the esthetic over the flamboyant.

In the afternoon we saw the Old Beguinage, near the Lake of Love-a place where we could stroll near picturesque canals. My visitors were interested in seeing where the old nuns lived. We watched an old lady making a piece of lace, for which Bruges is world famous. We also went to the home of Mr. Van Hoestenbergh, Mayor of Bruges. Miss Frick had expressed an interest in talking with someone in Bruges with expertise in Flemish art and paintings. I thought that this meeting would be a good start; there was no one more knowledgeable than this mayor. He had devoted more than half a century to public service in Bruges. During his career he had received famous people such as King Albert I and Queen Elizabeth of the Belgians, King Leopold III and Queen Astrid, Sir Winston Churchill, Margaret Truman, and many others.

The Mayor said to Miss Frick, "May your visit to Bruges be of lasting value to you in New York and Pittsburgh." He praised Miss Frick's father as a pioneer American industrialist and art collector who had promoted culture in the New World. The meeting resulted in a follow-up session with Mr. Janssens de Bisthoven, Curator of the Municipal Museum in Bruges.

In the evening Bruges' central marketplace was packed for the open air play of Holy Blood (legend has it that medieval Count Dirk Van Den Elzas had brought to Bruges a few drops of the blood of Christ). The dramatic passion play takes place every five years. It is a

## Library of Congress

drama of Christian life, with Bruges and its belfry as focal points. Medieval music and the ringing of church bells offered us a splendid spectacle. Prior to the play Miss Frick treated my family to dinner at the Panier D'Or, facing the belfry.

The next day we took a boat ride on the canals. After lunch we visited the Municipal Museum to admire the primitive paintings of the brothers Van Eyck, Van Der Weyden, and Memlinck. At City Hall we spent some time in the Gothic Room which exhibits paintings related to the history of Flanders. In the Palace of Justice, near City Hall, we visited the Chimney of the Franks and also the home of Mr. De Poortere, president of the Appellate Court in Ghent. The Convent of the Dames Anglaises (English ladies) is where Flemish poet and assistant Pastor Guido Gezelle lived. All this interested my American tourists.

But it was time to drive to Ghent where we enjoyed the beautiful Flemish countryside. Brick houses with red roof tiles and flower beds were everywhere. Our main purpose for going to Ghent was to visit the Romanesque Cathedral of St. Bavon, where the Flemish triptych of the brothers Van Eyck is on display. Ghent offers another tourist attraction: the Castle of the Counts of Flanders, where one can learn about medieval torture chambers, horse stables, and the private rooms of those notables. The triptych in the Cathedral is one of the great wonders in the history of Flemish painting. The middle panel shows the Adoration of the Lamb and the Holy Trinity. On a side panel are Adam and Eve.

Before I returned to France and Army Headquarters I spent a few days with the Payard family in Revigny-sur-Meuse. They drove me to the military monument in Verdun dedicated to the glory of World War I. Many GIs were also visiting there. My visit to this cemetery left me with a lasting impression of military heroism.

### Religion and Politics

One of my responsibilities as interpreter in Le Verdon was to make sure there would be Catholic masses on base. Protestant services were also available. Every Sunday the Pastor of Le Verdon, Father J. Guignot, said mass in a big tent. We became good

## Library of Congress

friends and often dined together. He was an erudite priest and was able to talk about subjects such as astronomy. He had his own telescope in his house. He was also very knowledgeable about French politics.

On one of these dinner occasions I asked him why there was so much controversy about the Vatican's influence on world politics. He said that the Church cannot be indifferent to indignities done to prelates in Communist China, and that the Church opposed Nazism and Fascism when human rights were violated.

### Combating Anti-US Propaganda

Earlier in June, I had received a rather disturbing note from my friend, Father Guignot. It referred to the much publicized brochure *Les Lettres aux Americains* (Letters to Americans) by Pierre Dumas, a well known columnist and controversial French writer. His letters were published in the *Sud Ouest* newspaper, an important daily of the Bordeaux area. As I read them, I was also concerned. Their content was vulgar and provocative. They were full of distortions on American society and on our GIs in Europe. It was obvious to me that the writer knew little about life in the United States.

Writings like these destroy feelings of good will between two nations. A Washington correspondent, Sokolsky, also wrote distorted views on French life which affected the respect we have for the French people and culture in America.

Father Guignot urged me to make a positive reply to Dumas' writing and to clarify our American military's position in France. I then realized how much I would personally be able to do, knowing something about French psychology. I was able to use my French to explain to some French audiences, such as townspeople and those in larger cities, the true aspects of American life.

This was the birth of my speech making projects as a member of the military in France. It undoubtedly firmed up my plans to someday apply for the Foreign Service. I made many

## Library of Congress

speeches in Le Verdon, Rochefort, Vannes, and Rennes. I would usually speak about life in the United States. My talks were always followed by a question and answer session. There were often favorable press comments on them in the Ouest France (Southwestern France). Some of my speeches were to commemorate the 200th anniversary of the birth of Marquis de Lafayette, who was a good friend of the US during the Revolutionary War. During these public talks I learned how to avoid sensitive political issues such as the Suez Canal crisis, McCarthyism, or race issues-topics on which I was often questioned.

When I showed up for duty following my European travel, I found myself working as an interpreter for the new commanding officer, Colonel Clifford Dann. He did not change my job description and I continued to act as liaison between US Military and French officials and press.

My activities as public speaker became more demanding, as all my talks had to be cleared first through military channels. Colonel Dann and I got along well and he showed enthusiasm for my work.

September 11, we were again at Suscinio Beach, in Brittany, for NODEX. I had a heartening note in my mailbox from Francis Decker, Mayor of Vannes. It read: "I am of the opinion that your speeches will contribute to the cause of binding our two great nations and your conferences will particularly interest our local population." To be a non-professional speaker before French audiences, at a time when the US military presence in France was controversial, was not an easy task.

October 4, I drove to Rennes, capital of the Department of Ille-et-Vilaine. Rennes was once the capital of Brittany when it was an independent province. Its sixteenth century parliament building is a classical structure. Here I met Marcel Guillet, Vice Governor of Lions International. Besides Guillet, I had a long talk with Dr. LeRoy, a famous anti-polio physician. He said that the Soviet Union was making a maximum effort to overtake the United States in technology at the expense of human liberties.

## Library of Congress

During the amphibious activities in Sarzeau, Morbihan, I spoke to 100 students at the Catholic College. The students were particularly interested in the evolution of human rights and social equality. Many questions were raised about the disturbances in Little Rock, Arkansas, Rock 'n' Roll music, and other facets of US life.

The highlight of my public relations job in the US Army was an October 6 speech, at the City Hall of Vannes, before members of the France-U.S.A. Society. Colonel McFaris, of the Orleans Military Command, was also present. It coincided with the 311th Amphibious Truck Company's participation in the off-shore discharge exercises. My last visits were to the ports of St. Nazaire and Lorient, where Colonel Dann wanted to talk with maritime and public officials.

Towards the end of my army tour in France, I was transferred to the US Army installation in Rochefort, Charente Maritime, as assistant non commissioned officer in charge of housing problems of dependent families.

In January, 1958, I received confidential orders to report for twenty days to Wertheim, Germany, to serve as interpreter at the US Headquarters during the 7th Army's Sabre Hawk exercises. I was assigned to two French military men, Colonels Tournoise and Neef, who came from France, with other colleagues of NATO, to observe the maneuvers.

In 1960, France withdrew from NATO's military arm. Fortunately, France remained in the political part of NATO.

### CHAPTER IV Return to Civilian Life

When I was discharged from the Army in April, 1958, I returned to my old job with Retail Credit Company in Pittsburgh and joined the US Army Reserves (Intelligence Unit) and was upgraded to a Noncommissioned Officer. I was lucky to have employment but I knew

## Library of Congress

I would not make a career with Retail Credit. My ambitions remained with the US Foreign Service. It would be a long haul.

During this period I began to explore the possibilities of finding a job with a Pittsburgh firm involved in international trade. My credentials were good. In the late 1950s and early 1960s many large US manufacturing firms established subsidiaries in Western Europe to promote their exports. The '60s are often referred to as the Golden Years in Western Europe because of this influx of US investments. It was the beginning of global trade as we know it today. President Eisenhower had stressed the need to fix our unfavorable trade balance. A "BUY AMERICAN" campaign, he stated, would stimulate the export of American products.

I was fortunate to secure a job as Foreign Trade Analyst with Rockwell Manufacturing Company, at its headquarters in Pittsburgh. I was assigned to their export division. Rockwell was in the planning stages of setting up a subsidiary in Geneva, Switzerland. Export Manager Eric Newman said, "It is important to be in on the ground floor." Rockwell Manufacturing made valves for oil pipelines and these products had a market potential in other countries of Latin America, Europe and Asia. Rockwell was also strong and competitive in power tools.

After a few months of training in Pittsburgh, Eric Newman picked me to work for Rockwell International in Geneva. This gave me an opportunity to work abroad and to expand my foreign experiences. The Geneva office was ultimately responsible for all of Rockwell's overseas sales. They had already developed manufacturing facilities in conjunction with a firm in West Germany.

### Geneva

On March 26, 1960, I left for Geneva on my first private business adventure abroad. They had made first class accommodations for me on a Swissair flight, a far cry from the military transport to Europe a few years before. I worked with a competent export sales team

## Library of Congress

headed by George Hanwell, who was also from Pennsylvania. We became good friends. In Geneva I took a refresher course in German at the Migros Department store. Although French was a must in Geneva, German was useful, too, as a large part of Switzerland was German speaking and many of our visitors at the office conversed in German.

In Geneva I resumed working on a part time, fee paid basis as an investigator for Retail Credit's International office. I worked on some interesting cases involving international clients who had business activities in Geneva.

If Geneva was the center of political neutrality, the League of Nations and U.N. Headquarters for Europe, it was now becoming an international operation point for US export activities. As Foreign Trade analyst at Rockwell I did market research on Rockwell products. It involved reading oil pipeline magazines to find potential markets for Rockwell valves and corresponding with export and import agents in other countries. Other administrative duties involved our subsidiary in West Germany and placing some orders by telex. International traffic was then done by telex and cables.

I enjoyed the French flavor of Geneva and its international ambiance. I met some interesting people to whom I had been introduced by friends in the United States. They had a talent and taste for European culture, differing from the run of the mill person. This kept my interest alive in a future foreign service career.

Shortly after my arrival in Geneva I received a dinner invitation from Miss Helen Wilson, a good friend of former US Ambassador to Ireland, Scott McLeod, who had a personal interest in me. Miss Wilson was a knowledgeable American living in Geneva who had contacts in both government and international business, and was also connected with the Inter Governmental Committee for European Migration (ICEM), in Geneva. Among the many other guests were international businessmen important to Rockwell International and, thus, to me.



## Library of Congress

Another time I attended a Retreat of the Moral Rearmament Movement at Caux, near Montreux, which has a breathtaking view of the mountains near Lausanne. Dr. Frank Buckman, founder of the movement, was there.

I visited the capital of Bern, a charming city with medieval remnants, and one day went to the estate of Miss Lilly Ogiz in La Sarraz, in the Swiss province of Vaud. She was the sister of Maryke Ogiz, Miss Frick's former governess in Pittsburgh.

I frequently visited Madame Elsa Berthoud, who lived in Geneva. She was the aunt of my good friend in Bruges, Walter Van Werveke, and had a good background in Belgian history and politics. She taught me about early twentieth century art collectors, such as Joseph Duveen, who brought classical paintings from Europe to the United States. Her brother, Laurent Van Werveke (Walter's father), had been an archeologist for the city of Bruges and a personal friend of Belgian King Leopold III. Her other brother, Professor Hans Van Werveke, was a known historian at the University of Ghent.

I did not limit myself to social visits. On my own, or with friends at the pension where I stayed, I explored the paintings at the Museum of Fine Arts. Pierre B#r, a design art student from Luzern, gave me valuable information on art in Switzerland. I acquainted myself with the works of Ferdinand Hodler, renowned Swiss painter, and the art library of the University of Geneva. Margaret Weigle (friend of Dr. Walter Hovey of the University of Pittsburgh), who worked at that library, explained some aspects of her work. I visited the Rath Museum, which has jewelry exhibits, and the Natural History Museum in Geneva, which has exquisite ethnographic works of art. I also visited Chamonix and Mont Blanc, which offers a majestic view of the Swiss mountains.

In Switzerland I was an active member of the American Club (then located in the Hotel Des Bergues). Each month we had a speaker's luncheon, with guests such as Ali Khan, Representative at the United Nations, and Ambassador Frederick M. Eaton, who was the US representative to the Ten-Nation Disarmament Conference, which eventually became

## Library of Congress

the Arms and Disarmament Agency (ACDA). One day, I attended a reception, sponsored by US firms in Geneva, honoring Mr. Lindt, the Swiss Ambassador in Washington.

### State Department's First Contact

On August 2, 1960, I was first contacted by Miss Hark, personnel officer at the US Delegation in Geneva. She had received my application for the US Foreign Service and pointed out that I would not be eligible to join the US Foreign Service Staff Corps until December, 1960, when I would have completed five years US citizenship. She did, however, give me a series of initial tests, both psychological and academic, including a physical exam. "The results," she said, "will be forwarded to the State Department personnel office in October, 1960." It was the first step on a rough road.

At the end of August I went to Chartres to visit its gothic cathedral. My maternal cousin, Jules Demar# a Franciscan priest, lived in Villeneuve (Auchy La Montagne). It was a reasonable distance from Chartres by train. It was good to see him again. We had last met in 1947 when he left Belgium for India as a missionary. He spent many years there.

This visit was like a philosophical retreat. In his quiet way, Jules conveyed his spiritual goals. He was no average priest, having had wide experience in Asia. At that time he served as a missionary in France because there had been a shortage of priests. Together we visited the gothic Cathedral of Amiens and took long walks.

On this journey, my parents and I got together in Ghent, and it was good to see them so well. We visited the "Lamb of God" by the Van Eyck brothers, and did some sightseeing in Brussels and Paris. We enjoyed Versailles, Notre Dame and Montmartre and for the first time I saw the Louvre. I was in awe to be in such a huge art gallery. I only managed to see the Mona Lisa, which, for this visit, satisfied my curiosity. September 7, I accompanied my family to Cherbourg, from where they sailed to New York. I returned to Geneva.

## Library of Congress

When I took my job as Foreign Trade Analyst at Rockwell I knew that my future would be limited there. The job in Geneva was based on the European salary scale. Unlike the Sales, Technical and Managerial staff, I would be unable to move up the ladder over the long haul. It thus became clear that it was time to move on. Eric Newman and I had discussed this eventuality and agreed that my career future in Geneva was limited.

In November, 1960, I watched, with many other Americans, the returns of the presidential election through the night. John F. Kennedy's close victory over Vice President Richard Nixon brought mixed reactions, including surprise for many. Nixon's credentials made him, some thought, a "shoo in." Senator Kennedy had done better — appeared more controlled — in the highly publicized TV debate. Regardless of partisan preference, many Americans in Geneva accepted this democratic victory as a new era of hope for America in the Cold War era.

On December 10, 1960, I flew back to Pittsburgh. Before I left, I visited the Uffizi and Pitti art galleries in Florence and the Port of Genoa. I also spent a few days with the Teodori family (mother and sister of my Georgetown friend Giuliano) in Gualdo Tadino near Perugia and Assisi. I enjoyed the rich and colorful Italian countryside.

### Work as a Foreign Trade Analyst in Puerto Rico

Shortly after my return I was offered employment with the Pittsburgh Plate Glass Company in their export subsidiary in Santurce, Puerto Rico. Since my foreign service application was still pending, I accepted the job offer in a meeting with Vice President John Henshaw. I flew to Puerto Rico for the interview and was hired on the spot. The Company had been on the island of Cuba until the Castro government had confiscated American property and froze US assets in the Havana banks in the Fall of 1960. When this occurred, Pittsburgh Plate Glass (PPG) relocated to Santurce, Puerto Rico. In the summer of 1959, when Fidel Castro turned against his own people and betrayed his revolutionary movement, many Cubans who were employees of PPG in Havana, volunteered to evacuate to Puerto Rico

## Library of Congress

at their own expense. Many of these Cubans left their families behind to secure a new livelihood. This helped both PPG and the Cubans to make a readjustment in a new land. PPG offered them reemployment in Puerto Rico.

I started working as a Foreign Trade Analyst at PPG in January, 1961. The Puerto Rican job provided invaluable experience and an in-depth preparation for my later work in Latin America. I became a serious student of Spanish and had a private tutor, Mrs. Georgia Fairbank, whose husband was president of Fairbank Diversey Corporation, in Hato Rey. I found a part time job teaching French in the evenings at the Puerto Rico Language Institute. The fact that I enjoyed teaching French helped me to acquire Spanish language skills. I had to explain French grammar in Spanish to my Puerto Rican students. Socially, I mixed with PPG Cuban employees and their families. I learned about their flight from Cuba and was impressed with their determination.

At PPG I corresponded with sales agents in Europe and Latin America. I placed glass orders, and in particular, NESA panels, which is window glass designed for airplanes and ocean liners. I also expedited glass order shipments with PPG factories. This meant sending daily wires to our PPG foreign department in Pittsburgh. That office maintained a close liaison with PPG plants. I was fortunate to work for a skilled export sales engineer, Charles Tilp, and his assistant, Paul Ferguson. I developed an export consciousness and learned how vital it was for sales engineers and export personnel to develop sophisticated ways of dealing with their colleagues in the field. One way was to become familiar with the language of the country with which they do business. Another was to learn the culture of the host country. Given our export trade imbalances beginning in the 1950s, it became imperative for US export firms to have competent staff in these areas.

Today's diplomacy is not limited to the traditional fields of political, economic, and consular activities. High on the current agenda of US Embassies and Consulates is the export of US made products. The United States wants access to markets in China, Japan, and other countries. Hence a slight change in the most favored nation policy of the Clinton

## Library of Congress

administration, resulting in granting China a favored trade status, which the administration thought was the best way to encourage human rights in that country. We now have a more pragmatic view toward human rights and foreign trade.

April 17, 1961, the day President Kennedy launched a freedom fighters' invasion on the Bay of Pigs in Cuba, turned out to be a military debacle. But the youthful president would later recoup the nation's prestige when he faced Nikita Khrushchev during the 1962 Cuban Missile crisis.

In Puerto Rico I continued my graduate work and enrolled in a course of US Government and Business at the School of Public Administration at the University of Puerto Rico, in Rio Piedras, 30 km from San Juan. In 1961 over 5000 students were enrolled. Dr. Goodsell of Harvard University was an excellent lecturer. I was one of only eleven students in the class and this permitted some teacher-student exchange. My thesis concerned US Federal government problems in the US balance of trade, and the increasing outflow of gold. Each student had to give an oral presentation in class. Others talked about hospital administration in the Commonwealth, ocean shipping and management. Puerto Rico's commonwealth status with the United States automatically bestows American citizenship to its inhabitants. Although Puerto Rico has a delegate in the US Congress, the people of Puerto Rico cannot vote in US presidential elections.

In the early 1960s Puerto Rico was influenced by mainland economic and social factors. American products were available everywhere, but in spite of this economic impact, Puerto Ricans tried to preserve their Spanish cultural identity. I was struck with the political maturity of my university classmates. They did not shy away from discussing political issues on and off campus, though these political discussions reached their climax in the classroom. Latin American students are anxious to express their political and social grievances in public, and their intellectuals have traditionally been the seeds for active political leaders. Puerto Rican students played a role in redressing the many inequities

## Library of Congress

of the past. The University of Puerto Rico is one of those vibrant places where students identify with future political leadership roles in Latin America.

The continuing flow of Cuban refugees to Puerto Rico further stimulated political debate. They were very vocal about Cuba's historic past and current revolutionary struggles. Many Cubans who worked with me at PPG were well educated. They belonged to upper middle class families and had received college training in both Havana and Europe. It was common to meet Cubans in Puerto Rico who were fluent in Spanish, French, and English. My Cuban friends would often remind me that the Castro revolution did not begin in the maestro jungle, but had been fomented at the University of Havana.

One of President Kennedy's first foreign policy ideas was "The Alliance for Progress," which was a blueprint for economic cooperation with Latin America. This program led to many effective projects, such as building roads, hospitals, schools and other technical assistance under the umbrella of the Agency of International Development (AID).

I became very active at the Instituto de Idiomas (Institute of Languages). Director Dr. Kalthoff had asked me to start an intermediate English class with fifteen students and a French beginner's class of five students. As I taught both French and English to Spanish speaking students, my Spanish improved fast and my Puerto Rican students were quick to pick up French.

During this busy schedule I met Chuay Kannawat of Bangkok, Thailand, who was preparing his doctoral thesis in economics at the University of Wisconsin. One of his goals was to familiarize himself with the workings of "Fomento," a state industrial planning agency in Puerto Rico attempting to attract foreign investments. He wanted to know whether similar agencies could work to bring about economic revival in Thailand. Before we parted in the summer, I questioned Chuay again on his research project. He commented that the economic resurgence of Puerto Rico was unique, not to be compared with any other development experiment. He stated that the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico

## Library of Congress

was benefiting from the backing of a powerful nation. His conclusion was that this unique relationship would not apply to Thailand.

On February 24, 1961, Miss Frick replied to my message to her on her resignation from the Board of Trustees of the Frick Collection. Her resignation protested the Board's decision (5-3) to accept Rockefeller paintings and other minor works of art which were bequeathed to the city of New York by the late John Rockefeller. Miss Frick protested the introduction of modern works of art rather than conventional pieces. Such a move would be contrary to the late Henry Clay Frick's will. She wrote "Dear Arnold: Many thanks for your nice, sympathetic letter about the Frick Collection. I am in great hope that the Trustees will be pressured into doing the right thing, for they have been so criticized by the world at large that they must realize what a terrific mistake they made..."

When I was in Ponce (Puerto Rico's second largest city), I realized how much traditional art meant. I visited the Ferrer Museum of Fine Arts, one of the finest collections in the Caribbean. Its founder, Luis A. Ferrer, was the political opponent of the incumbent Democratic Governor, Mu#oz Marin. Ferrer steadfastly urged Puerto Rican voters to vote for statehood, whereas Governor Mu#oz espoused the continuation of a commonwealth status for Puerto Rico. He was one of the promoters of "Operation Bootstrap," a program designed to revive Puerto Rico after WWII.

Also at this juncture, dictator Rafael Trujillo, of the Dominican Republic, was assassinated. This was well received by the majority of the Dominicans. The Fran#ois Duvalier regime, in Haiti, would not fare better in later years.

Puerto Rico was an exception to this political domino effect in the Caribbean. Although there were leftist groups who advocated independence from the United States, they represented a minority of dissenters, although they were involved in the assassination attempt on former President Harry Truman. The traditional Republican and Democratic parties have supported vital economic links with the US

## Library of Congress

My six months' stay in Puerto Rico was a decisive time in my final plan to join the US Foreign Service. On June 8, 1961, I sent a cable to John Forbes, Director of Personnel at the State Department, accepting a position with the US Foreign Service Staff Corps. I had met the five year citizenship requirement, and although I prepared for my return to Pittsburgh, there would not be an appointment confirmation until August 1, 1961.

On June 17, the Roger Toffel family of "Casa Switzerland," where I lived in Santurce, accompanied me to the international airport of San Juan, where I boarded a flight for Miami. When I arrived at Dulles International Airport, it became clear that my decision to return to Washington would forever change my future.

### CHAPTER V Training in the State Department First Assignment: Panama

Assignments to the State Department's Foreign Service were made fairly — candidates who passed the written and oral exams were selected on a geographic basis. They wanted all States to be represented in the Foreign Service. I reported for duty at the State Department on August 16, 1961, with fifteen young students of various geographic and academic identities. We underwent a seven day orientation program on the organization of both the State Department and the Foreign Service. This consisted of films and classes which explained the different functions of each bureau.

I had found a comfortable room on F Street within walking distance of the Department. My job entailed working in the Operations Center to screen incoming diplomatic messages from the field. They wanted us to know different government dispatches, office symbols, codes, and security classifications. At the same time I had to take courses at the Foreign Service Institute, located across the Potomac in Arlington, Virginia. These classes were useful because they provided insights into the actual life one leads in the Foreign Service. There they also tested me on my French and Dutch reading and speaking ability.



## Library of Congress

One day we were given a private viewing of the diplomatic rooms, called the Secretariat, on the seventh and eighth floors of the State Department. At that time it consisted of the offices of Secretary of State Dean Rusk and Deputy Secretary Chester Bowles.

Many patrons of the arts and wealthy donors have given, or loaned, French period furniture and Early American furnishings to the State Department. Its dining room has French chandeliers, a gift from Douglas Dillon, Secretary of the Treasury under Kennedy. He also served as Ambassador to France. These diplomatic reception rooms are very special, with a curator who oversees acquisitions and caretaking.

One of the serious problems facing the State Department and the US Foreign Service, in 1961, was a pending personnel reduction in force (RIF). Fortunately, it did not affect my plans. In the political arena, the President and State Department policy makers were also confronted with an intensifying crisis in West Berlin. We could not afford to let the people of West Berlin fall into the Communist orbit. We negotiated with our Western European Allies to guarantee free access to West Berlin. The USSR had already violated the Potsdam Treaty by closing the border between East and West Germany. Communism had been a failure in Eastern Europe, while Western Europe's economy was booming. With the help of the Marshall Plan, Western Europe had become a strong political and economic bloc, feared by the Communist leadership in Moscow.

Fall in Washington, DC, traditionally the debut of the official social season at the White House, is also the opening of the General Assembly at the United Nations in New York. This fall (1961) President Kennedy welcomed Peruvian President and Mrs. Prado for a State visit. I saw President and Mrs. Kennedy leaving Blair House with their guests and was struck by their charisma.

I tried to make some social contacts in the Capital, as I knew this would be my home base during my Foreign Service career. In late September, I had a meeting with former US Ambassador to Ireland, Scott McLeod, at his office in the new Senate office

## Library of Congress

building on Capitol Hill. He now served as counsel to the Minority of the Committee on Appropriations. He was working for Senator Styles Bridges of New Hampshire. I also met the Ambassador's number two man at the Embassy in Dublin, Minister Robert E. Ward, who now had an assignment in the Office of Security and Consular Affairs. Both encouraged me in pursuing my career goals. This was my last meeting with Ambassador McLeod. He died suddenly November 7, 1961.

At that time I began to write some articles for a Bruges weekly on political and social life in the United States. I also translated them from English into Dutch. Prior to publication, I had to submit them for approval to Dr. Noble, Chairman of the Review Board for Unofficial Publications. This office is part of the historical office in the Department. My articles, as they did not contain controversial material, were routinely approved.

On another occasion I met Leon Cowles, Deputy Chief of Mission at our Embassy in Ankara, Turkey. He gave me good advice, to concentrate on two areas of career development: consular work and security.

Since I had passed the proficiency tests in both French and Dutch at the Foreign Service Institute, I ventured to take the professional interpreter's test, which requires highly practical experience as an interpreter at international conferences. This did not come out so well. It was easy for me to act as an interpreter in the US Army, but instantaneous interpreting at Conferences requires different professional skills. I learned from this, however, and over the years I tried to keep my foreign languages alive in both reading and writing. My freelance writing for the weekly newspaper developed these talents, my fluency in French and Flemish would prove important assets later on.

Besides the crisis in West Berlin, the Kennedy Administration had to cope with many rallies in the capital protesting nuclear tests. The 22nd Communist Congress, in Moscow, was a cause for concern. The USSR and China had shown basic disagreement on

## Library of Congress

Leninist-Marxist dogma, as Nikita Khrushchev appeared willing to negotiate, while Communist China proved a more ardent enemy of the United States.

December 1, I met Mrs. Katherine McCook Knox, an artist and lifetime friend of Miss Frick. She invited me to accompany her to the Cosmos Club to see an art exhibit about the American Civil War. It was an opportunity to see the frescos that represent Lafayette Square in front of the White House. Mrs. Knox introduced me to Mr. Campbell, Assistant Curator of the National Gallery of Art, and Miss Josephine Cobb, Assistant Curator of the National Archives, both active members of the Colombia Historical Society in Washington, DC, which promotes research for works on the lives of famous Washingtonians.

Mrs. Knox, a staunch Republican, approved of what Mrs. Kennedy was doing in redecorating the White House. Her father, the late Congressman McCook, was once a famous Republican from New York state. The McCook family was prominent in the US Civil War. Mrs. Knox invited me to see her Georgetown home on N Street, which dates back to 1806. In her drawing room she has a lovely print of the Alexander Healy painting of Abraham Lincoln. Her interest in the history of paintings and painters dates back many years. She prepared a book (there is a copy in the White House) on the history of the art works in the White House, still being used, today, and considered a major source of reference for art in the Executive Mansion. Mrs. Knox became a good friend and I followed her advice to keep extensive diaries on my life and travels.

December 20, I received my first foreign service assignment to the American Embassy in Panama City. As Panama was one of the centers for diplomatic Couriers, I received special training in communications. I was also enrolled in an intensive course of Spanish at the Foreign Service Institute. I was positive about my first post as it was in a vital geopolitical area of Latin America with American security interests in the Canal Zone.

I had a couple of months prior to departure in February 1962 to prepare. I was automatically assigned to the Office of American Republics (ARA) for personnel

## Library of Congress

processing. It was customary for Foreign Service personnel to write the Chief of Mission announcing the selection. I sent letters to Ambassador Joseph Farland and Thomas Huff, Administrative Officer, to which I received the usual courtesy replies.

After Christmas, I spent a few days in New York City visiting the Metropolitan Museum of Art, which has lovely paintings of the Renaissance and later periods. The Flemish and Dutch schools are well represented. Rembrandt's work of Aristotle and the bust of Homer were on display in the entrance. I also went to Bedford Village, in New York, where I was an overnight guest of Miss Helen Frick. She had invited me to visit Westmoreland Farm, her personal residence. I stayed at the guest house and the managing caretakers, Mr. and Mrs. Sam Miller, took good care of me. It was a serene place to be at Christmas time. It was snowing and Westmoreland Farm looked peaceful. In the evening I had dinner in New York City with my Korean friend, Choung Il Chee.

When I returned to Washington the next day I met Helen Watson and Irene Stancik, who were consultants in the State Department. They were the communications and personnel officers in Panama City and briefed me on what my actual job responsibilities would be at the Embassy.

As my training at the Foreign Service Institute progressed it became clear to me that as a member of the Foreign Service I would have to be well prepared physically and psychologically to succeed in this job. There was a course which focused primarily on US foreign policy in the 1960s. It was pointed out that the 1950s had been a period of containment (a term coined by career diplomat George Kennan) of Communism. This policy was based on military considerations and economic priorities were subordinated to them. The Korean conflict was an example of this era. In both Europe and Asia we tried to contain Communism through an intensive military buildup. President Kennedy's foreign policy objectives for the 1960s would include economic development through the Agency for International Development (AID), which would be its effective tool. Hence, military considerations in the 1960s would take second place to the economic. Besides

## Library of Congress

information on AID they briefed us on the role of the Military Assistance Group (MAAG) and United States Information Service (USIS). The latter deals with cultural, media, and educational endeavors, such as American libraries overseas. These agencies were directly responsible to the American Ambassador. Our Foreign Service class was informed of the acute economic and social problems in Latin America, Asia, and Africa.

My personal interest in visiting American museums was an ongoing hobby. I was particularly interested in museums in the United States and other countries adorned with Flemish works of art. I went to the Walters Art Gallery, in Baltimore, where I discovered little Flemish woodcarvings and tapestries of Tournai. I felt reassured that my curiosity about art would someday be rewarding in the Foreign Service, especially when the Foreign Service Institute training class arranged a mandatory visit to the Mellon National Gallery. A curator was assigned to our class and presented a general overview of the three main trends of American architecture: New England architecture, including Dutch influence in New York; the Georgian colonial phase reflected in the State capitol of Richmond; and the old capital of Virginia, in Williamsburg. The third school included the Greek revival as seen in many public buildings in Washington, D. C.

On another occasion our foreign service staff was given an interpretation of American paintings, such as those by 18th century masters Gilbert, Stuart, and Ingress. FSI teachers also encouraged us to visit the Phillips Art Gallery near Dupont Circle, where impressionist and post impressionist art works abound (Daumier, Picasso, Manet, Renoir, Goya, Van Gogh, Cezanne). If the Corcoran, Mellon, and Phillips collect mostly European-American paintings, the Freer Gallery of art has a superb collection of Chinese, Japanese, Indian and Korean art.

## Panama

I arrived in Panama City in late evening of February 27, 1962. When I stepped off the plane I could feel the humidity of the tropics, but I also noted the beauty of the tropical

## Library of Congress

green and the many flowers in the background. It was a poignant moment for me to set foot on Panamanian soil, where I would start my first foreign service assignment. I was met at Tocumen International by members of the Embassy Communications Center. They helped me to get through Panamanian Customs and immigration officials. The Panamanian officials made me feel welcome in their country.

It was customary for new embassy arrivals to stay at the Tivoli Hotel, in the Canal Zone, until one could find permanent quarters. This had some drawbacks in that one was mixed with Americans instead of Panamanians, but it allowed me to get to know the area and to get practical information on living conditions. The Tivoli Hotel is an old colonial wooden building built during the US construction of the Canal to house American employees of the Panama Canal Company. Our stay there was referred to as an “induction course.” I was told an Embassy driver would pick me up to report to work the next day.

My duties at the Embassy were those of Communications (Pouch) Supervisor. I would be responsible for preparing all diplomatic pouches going to our foreign service posts in Latin America and Washington. Fred Kadera and Eugene Mewhorter worked for me. Helen Watson, my immediate boss, delegated a lot of authority and let me make my own decisions. She had told me it would be a pressured job but that social life at the post was such that we were all like a big family. I was determined to adjust to this rigid on-the-job discipline and busy after-hours social life. At early Embassy personnel meetings I learned that I would be on probation for two years, after which my performance would be reviewed. Then, if warranted, I would be retained on a permanent career basis.

My job put me in close daily contact with the diplomatic couriers of the Regional Courier office at the Embassy. Al Verrier, chief of the office, made sure that I got to know everyone on the staff. I learned a great deal about the life of a diplomatic courier. They were an active group of diplomats who saw to it that diplomatic pouches were securely transported from the Embassy to foreign service posts around the world. I was often invited for dinner at the homes of diplomatic couriers.

## Library of Congress

I thought that my stay in Puerto Rico would have helped me to understand Panama quickly. However, it was a completely different ballgame. Panama was (and is) a proud, nationalistic, and independent sovereign nation fighting to sever some of its paternalistic ties with the United States. It became clear to me that Panama would become the focus of my political and diplomatic interest. I would have to explore this complex country.

I was fortunate to have Ambassador Joseph Farland as Chief of Mission in Panama. He was the only Republican diplomat to stay on as President Kennedy's envoy. Ambassador Farland had a professional managerial style and a personal touch with the people of Panama. He would often drive alone in the Panamanian countryside to visit little villages and mix with local townspeople. He was a charismatic ambassador and loved by the Panamanians. When I first met him in his office he told me to get away from the Embassy and to take some rides in the country. He said, "It's the only way to become familiar with Panamanian social conditions and culture."

He had two young political aides on his staff: Steve Bosworth and Diego Asencio, who later became Ambassadors in their own right. Steve became US Ambassador to the Philippines and Diego served as Ambassador to Brazil and Assistant Secretary of State for Consular Affairs. I learned from both, as they often dropped by my office for a chat. Steve was very "up front" with me and we discussed international economic policies and the stability of the US dollar on world markets.

Gene Scassa, who came on board in Communications a few months later, was also from Pennsylvania, and we became good friends. He worked for me awhile and later became our Ambassador to Belize in the early 1990s. Gene used to have Open House parties for the Embassy staff and he would invite Panamanian guests as well. At these parties it was possible to learn more about Panamanian political and cultural trends. From time to time Canal Zone residents were included on the guest lists.

## Library of Congress

Panama has always caught the attention of the world media. In 1961, the attention was on Panamanian sovereignty in the Canal Zone and the need for a revision of the 1903 Treaty. In the late 1980s Panama was the focus of world attention because of Manuel Noriega's removal from office because of his drug trafficking ties. Its geographical location near Cuba and Colombia, and the Panama Canal controlling world shipping, are factors which have put it on the political map of the world.

Early on in my first year in Panama I became acquainted with Dr. Aurelio Ocaña, a noted dentist and son of a Panamanian diplomat (his father had been Consul in London, Paris, and Santiago). Aurelio had also studied at the University of Bordeaux. We used to have dinner at the Union Club to talk about current events.

In March of 1962, I met Monsignor Antonio Pinci, the Papal Nuncio in Panama. My Georgetown friend Giuliano's uncle, Monsignor Vittore Righi, had suggested that I call on him. He enjoyed meeting me, he said, and we talked in French. He was fascinated by John Kennedy's image. He did not think that the President would be bluffed by the Soviets. He had a grasp of US foreign policy in Latin America which we discussed when I visited him from time to time.

In early 1962, President Kennedy reinforced the US military forces in Southeast Asia (Thailand, Laos, and South Vietnam) to show Khrushchev that the United States would not tolerate a Communist takeover in Asia. But our Embassy Communication Center was preoccupied with preparations for President Roberto F. Chiari's official visit to President Kennedy in Washington. The goal was to improve US-Panamanian relations and to take a good look at the 1903 Panama Canal Treaty.

If Secretary of State Dean Rusk was Kennedy's point man, others in the Department, such as Neil McManus, Panama Desk Officer; Lansing Collins, Director; and Assistant Secretary of State for Latin American Affairs Edwin Martin, were key players in consulting



## Library of Congress

with Congress. In the US Canal Zone, Major General Robert Fleming was the chief officer-in-charge. (He was appointed by the President and approved by the US Senate.)

Our strategic position in Panama was to guarantee the security of the Canal and its accessibility to world shipping. This longstanding policy was made possible by the creation of Headquarters Armed Forces in the Caribbean (COMCARIB), the US Army Caribbean 15th Naval District, and Fallbrook Air Force Command (UNARCARIB). These were vital to the protection of the Canal installations.

President Chiari's state visit to Washington was a success. Besides the usual official state courtesies it was agreed to set up a Commission of representatives to review the 1903 Panama Canal Treaty. Panamanian Foreign Minister Galileo Solis and Attorney Fabrega were part of the Panamanian team. While all this was going on there was much press speculation about the future of the Canal.

The 1903 Panama Canal treaty was finessed by Bunau-Varilla, a diplomat of French origin who sold French stock in the Canal to Americans. My friend, Aurelio, said that because of this move, Varilla is considered a traitor in Panamanian history books. Panama was governed by Spain and Colombia before 1903, and owes its independence to US brokerage with Colombia and the for building the Canal.

One proposal was to build a sea-level canal by the 1980s which would replace the present Canal with locks. Engineering experts of the bilateral Panamanian and US Commission alleged that the Canal would be outdated by that time and would not serve increased world traffic. Panama and Colombia were often mentioned as likely sites for a sea-level canal.

Besides taking courses in Visa and Passport Law and attending a course in Panamanian history at the University of Panama, I was also a guest teacher of English at the North American Panamanian Institute. My contact with teachers and students was invaluable. I learned about subversive Cuban activities at the University of Panama. Also, the Panamanian daily, Estrella de Panama, often alluded to the Panamanian port of Bocas

## Library of Congress

del Torro, used by Castro to supply arms. Castro subversion was not confined to Panama alone. Cuban infiltration was endemic in many other Latin countries. Bolivia, Chile, Venezuela, and Honduras were affected by Castro-type revolutionary movements.

Panama was a convenient stopover for US Congressional delegations and political leaders. Attorney General Robert Kennedy also visited the Canal Zone on his way to Brazil. I had wanted to meet him. I did not realize that a few years later I would have that opportunity when I was assigned as his assistant for a few days at our Embassy in London.

On August 28, 1962, Panamanian Major Hurtado led an uprising which lasted only a few days.

During my tour in Panama I wrote articles in *Tierra y Dos Mares*, a commercial magazine published by Marcela Barraza, with US political and cultural overtones. It had a wide audience.

In July, 1962, I took some time off to visit the Panamanian island of Taboga, seventy five miles from the capital, and Fort Kobe Beach near Colon on the Atlantic side. Most of our free time activities were concentrated on the beach. We also used the swimming pool facilities at nearby US military bases.

On September 8, 1962, I attended a graduation at the Morales School of Dancing and met prima ballerina Margot Fonteyn, the guest of honor. She was married to Panamanian politician and diplomat Roberto Arias, whom she met when he was in the Panamanian diplomatic service in London. Arias's father had twice been president of Panama. Miss Fonteyn talked about her ballet appearances in Bruges and the La Monnaie theater in Brussels. She told me that she often came to Panama to participate in charity performances.

## Library of Congress

Two events in 1962 overshadowed all other social and diplomatic news in Panama. On October 12, Under Secretary of State George Ball came to Panama to inaugurate the Panamanian bridge, which would forever link the United States with its Central and South American neighbors. Although I did not personally attend the ceremony, we, in the Communications Section, worked hard to make this visit run smoothly. We were on call for 24 hours, meeting diplomatic couriers bringing conference messages and receiving calls from Secretary Ball's party.

### The Cuban Missile Crisis

In October, 1962, the Cuban missile crisis caused a major international crisis which directly affected us in Panama. It reached its climax when President Kennedy officially blockaded Cuba in a showdown with Soviet Chairman Nikita Khrushchev to have Soviet missiles removed from Cuba. Our Embassy was on official alert for several days. Because of Panama's proximity to Cuba, personnel and dependents received evacuation instructions in case this became necessary.

The Cuban missile crisis proved to be one of the most tense periods of my foreign service career and prepared me for future assignments and events.

I had already prepared a reception for 60 members of the Embassy and numerous Panamanians and offered to cancel it, but security officers told me to proceed with the party. Since so many staff members were on duty, it was felt that it would look less conspicuous to go ahead with my plans. It proved to be an interesting party.

Carl Davis, Public Affairs Officer, and his family also attended. He had worked closely with Ambassador Farland in Santo Domingo, and encouraged us to be positive in such circumstances. Kennedy's stance in the crisis proved to be a breakthrough for the United States in its challenge with the Soviet Union. Morale at the Embassy was especially high

## Library of Congress

during the crisis, and we were later commended for our efforts by Secretary of State Dean Rusk.

Ed Scott, a well known journalist from New Zealand, had said that Latin America had given President Kennedy a full mandate to invade Cuba in October 1962, and that he would never have that opportunity again. I remembered his comments when we went through the Falkland Islands crisis in 1982. Although the Latin American press took every opportunity to criticize the US political/military involvement in the hemisphere, Kennedy's defiance in the Cuban crisis, and the US stance during the Falkland Islands crisis (when Reagan supported Prime Minister Thatcher's invasion) were two instances where Western strength was needed to stop blatant aggression.

Matos Lindomir, a Third Secretary of the Brazilian Embassy in Panama, was my downstairs neighbor. We shared many experiences. Matos was a serious Vice Consul. We compared our foreign service personnel systems. I learned that Brazilian foreign service housing allowances were more generous than those in the United States. He focused on political affairs as well, and said that Brazilian University circles and labor unions were infiltrated by communists. He favored a stronger US position in Brazil and Latin America to counter attack this influence. He commented that the Communists were taking advantage of negative publicity directed against the US because of American companies in Brazil that had been paying low wages to their Brazilian workers. Matos was referring to food companies such as Swift and Armour. He also didn't think it was a good idea for the United States to negate loans to Uruguay and Brazil because they had dictatorial regimes. He believed that the United States should use its political and economic leverage to improve its good neighbor policy.

At other receptions in town I would often talk in French with Mr. Vasse, the French ambassador and Mr. Guillas, secretary of the French Embassy. The French, because of their earlier attempts to build a canal, have had many years of diplomatic presence in Panama.

## Library of Congress

Panama City also offered good social amenities, such as operas at the Presidente Theater. I also attended a piano concert by Argentinean pianist Sciliano Escudero, and a concert by the famous Mexican cellist, Adolfo Odnoposoff, at the Bella Vista Theater. On the other hand, the Canal Zone had a good playhouse.

On November 9, 1962, we all attended a US Marine Guard reception on the occasion of the 187th birthday of the US Marine Corps. US Embassy employees have traditionally had cordial relations with US Marine guards because they loyally protect US property and personnel abroad.

Shortly thereafter, FSO Wallace Stuart arrived from our embassy in New Delhi to take charge of the Deputy Chief of Mission slot in Panama. He was a positive influence in our diplomatic relations with Panama. Mrs. Stuart was of Bolivian origin and was very active in embassy activities. Mr. Stuart would often chair Deputy Chief of Mission staff meetings during Ambassador Farland's absence.

I enjoyed my first Christmas in the tropics in 1962. I had been invited by some neighbors, the Icazza family, to see their Nacimiento (Christmas manger) on their patio. It is a tradition in Panama to display the manger in front of the home. This particular one represented all phases of Christ's life. Decorations and Christmas lights offered a colorful spectacle in the neighborhood.

On Christmas Eve many of us at the Embassy were invited to a *réveillon* party with a Panamanian family. On Christmas day our communications staff had a swimming party at the Hilton Hotel.

In January, 1963, Ambassador Farland attended a conference, in San Salvador, of the Chiefs of Missions of Central America. This was a prelude to President Kennedy's visit to San Jose, Costa Rica, in March. We all felt that our workload had gone up because of the preparations for this summit. Sargent Shriver, head of the Peace Corps and brother-in-law

## Library of Congress

of the President, had stopped over. We also had a regional meeting in Panama City, of Public Affairs officers in the region, presided over by Edward R. Murrow, popular director of the United States Information Agency (USIA), whose World War II broadcasts from BBC Free London had touched the homes of many.

On March 15, 1963, President Kennedy and his Central American counterparts announced the Declaration of San Jose. It was a successful public relations event for the President. Ambassador Farland was there, too, and received instructions from the President to report back to him on the progress of the exploratory talks with Panamanian and Canal Zone officials on the future status of the Panama Canal.

A few days later I received word from Pittsburgh that my father had been hospitalized with a bleeding ulcer. It was hard to be far from him at this difficult time. I was able to get through to my parents by telephone and was relieved to hear that my father's prospects for recovery were good.

It had been Embassy personnel policy, work permitting, to let Embassy staff travel to adjacent countries to learn more about Latin American culture. On April 11, 1963, I flew to San Jose, Costa Rica, traveling with USIS officer Mary Kohler. It was particularly interesting since I arrived in the middle of Holy Week when there were many religious festivities. Most of the shops were closed. I stayed four days at the Pensione Villa Blanca and visited my foreign service classmate, Don Shannon, at our Embassy in San Jose. We had both entered the foreign service in 1961. He introduced me to Ambassador Raymond L. Telles, Jr. (1961-1967) and some other members of the Embassy staff.

The flag at the US Embassy was at half mast in honor of Navy personnel who had perished in a tragic submarine accident. Many public buildings and even small shopkeepers were displaying a photo of President Kennedy in remembrance of his historic meeting with other Central American presidents at the National Theater.

## Library of Congress

I visited the National Museum, the Cathedral, and the Costa Rican Foreign Office. I enjoyed a bus tour through the coffee plantation at Cartago, twenty miles from San Jose. There I entered the famous Catholic shrine, the Basilica of Our Lady of Los Angeles. Costa Rica, I was told, was a showcase of progress and democracy. Many German and US firms had invested in this stable political climate. I could appreciate the adequate infrastructure of roads, clean streets, and a sense of order everywhere. The Germans were buying a great portion of the Costa Rican coffee production. To this day Germany remains interested in Costa Rican and Latin American business deals. (If foreign investors were interested in Costa Rican political stability, the reverse was true in neighboring Nicaragua, where the Somoza family had an oligarchic grip on its people.) I also visited the modern University in San Jose where President Kennedy gave his farewell address in March, appealing for progress in the Americas.

In August of 1963, I had completed my two years probationary period in the Foreign Service as Communications Supervisor. *Chargé d'affaires* Wallace Stuart prepared my report and recommended my retention in the Service.

### Transfer to Consular Work

When I had completed the visa courses I applied for the citizenship and passport lessons. I was now beginning to acquaint myself with US Consular laws and, from time to time, I would sit in with Consular officers during visa interviews. When I was transferred to the Consular section in Panama, I was fortunate to work for a consular team headed by Consul Virgil Prichard, who encouraged Vice Consuls Frank Barrett and Don McConville to give me on the job training. Vice Consul Sam Karp and I had studied the visa manual together. (He was later reassigned to Nicaragua.) They encouraged me to extend my tour of duty in the Consular section until October, 1964, which I did. I quickly became acquainted with the laws on business and tourist visas when Frank, Don and I would go out to the Capri restaurant for Italian food and long talks on world events.

## Library of Congress

June 27, I was a guest of Matos Lindomir and Mr. Small, Deputy Chief of Mission of the Embassy of Brazil, to join them at a soccer game between Brazil and Panama at the National Stadium (Panama won 2-0). After the game, I joined the Brazilian diplomats in the dressing room where we were introduced to all the players. The sports event ended at a reception for them at the Brazilian Embassy.

I attended the official celebration of Library Week at the University of Panama for a special lecture on Cervantes. Rector of the University Narciso Garay and the Ecuadoran Ambassador to Panama also attended.

The Cresta Hill Section of Panama City is the focal point of society gatherings, and it was at the US Ambassador's residence that Ambassador and Mrs. Farland received the entire staff (US and Panamanian), private industry leaders, Panamanian government officials, and Ambassadors accredited to Panama, for the Fourth of July celebration. It was pouring rain, as it often did in the evenings. We could not find parking space in the gardens of the estate. The residence was decorated with white, red and blue flowers, a gift from the Foreign Chiefs of Mission. Officers' wives alternated in acting as hostesses.

Ambassador Farland bid farewell to the Embassy staff at a formal banquet in the Bella Vista Room of the Panama Hilton Hotel. When the Farlands had left, President Kennedy appointed Wallace W. Stuart as Charg# d'Affaires, Minister Counselor (a step below Ambassador) pending the selection of a new envoy. In November Frank Coffin, of Maine, was appointed to replace Ambassador Farland, but because of the assassination of President Kennedy, he was not confirmed by the Senate.

### Chiriqui Visit

I drove with a few friends to David and Boquete in the Chiriqui Province. Because of the winding roads it took us ten hours. This bad road has now become a part of the Inter American highway that stretches from Alaska to Argentina. David is the capital of Chiriqui.



## Library of Congress

At that time it had a population of 15,000, and was the third largest city in the Republic. It is rich in timber, coffee, cacao, sugar, rice, bananas and cattle. A river winds through town, which has numerous old churches. Inland from David are the deeply forested highlands of Chiriqui, whose highest point is El Volcan (11,000 feet). The most picturesque place is Boquete, at 4,000 feet, which is famous for its coffee plantations, bananas, orange groves and flower gardens.

### Kennedy Assassination

As life seemed to become normal at our Embassy we were all stunned at the news that President Kennedy had died of a bullet wound to the head during his visit to Dallas, Texas, and that Vice President Lyndon Johnson had been sworn in on Air Force One as President. Many local employees shed tears. The American flag in front of our Embassy was hung at half mast and later was draped in black, according to military custom.

Panamanian Foreign Minister Galileo Solis was the first to arrive at the Embassy to pay his respects to our Charg# d'Affaires. Other Chiefs of Mission accredited to Panama also showed up. Visitors could sign a condolence register book in the lobby of the Embassy. The news of Kennedy's brutal assassination caused much emotion throughout Panama because the President was deeply loved in Latin America. Requiem masses were said in many churches throughout the Republic.

In accordance with President Johnson's declaration of official mourning until December 22, all social functions at the Embassy were canceled. I spent the evening at the home of Ellen Watson, a friend and co-worker, who had invited me to watch the events in Washington, DC on TV. Since we had to work the day of President Kennedy's funeral, we listened to the radio at the Embassy giving us details of the services at St. Matthews Cathedral.

### Off-duty Travel to Guatemala

## Library of Congress

On December 3, 1963, I traveled to Guatemala on a turbulent flight from Panama. Upon arrival at the airport, I was surprised how much cooler it was than in Panama. I looked forward to visiting this ancient country. I stayed at the Casa Shaw rooming house and slept with a woolen blanket for the first time in two years. Mrs. Shaw, an American, ran this well furnished, antique hostel. The invigorating climate of Guatemala does justice to the country's reputation as a land of eternal spring. There were many tourists in the city.

The next morning I rode a bus to Antigua, the old capital of the Republic, about two and a half miles from Guatemala City. The bus took us through green highland country and our guide showed us the University of San Carlos, where some old paintings are preserved. The Governor's palace, a convent, and the Church of Merced are other remnants of historical value in this colonial town. On my own I visited the little Indian town of San Antonio de Agua Caliente. The townspeople allowed me into their homes, where I saw how they make beautiful textile handicraft Indian dolls. This was a very touching visit.

The imposing presidential palace in downtown Guatemala City was started in 1939 and finished in 1943. It houses the President's offices, the Ministry of Foreign Relations, and other ministries. The murals in the palace were created by Suarez. The diplomatic reception room is made of cedar wood and the conference hall has a tapestry, *La Ofrenda* (offering), by Carlos Rigolt. The palace balcony offers an interesting panorama of the colorful square. The Indians come in their colorful clothes to the marketplace with products for sale. Of all the central marketplaces in Central America, the one in Guatemala City is the most colorful.

The Metropolitan Cathedral is a Spanish colonial church but with a distinct Indian characteristic style, with corn leaves in the facade, symbolic of the fruit of the Indians' labor. The American Embassy is a tall, gray building located one block from the Shaw pension. The stores adjacent to the Embassy showed photos of President Kennedy's funeral.

## Library of Congress

I spent a few hours at the Archeological Museum, where they preserve several Piedras Negras and other prehistoric Mayan art works and Indian fabrics. Next door is the Museum of Natural History and the Fine Art Museum. The latter has a fine collection of modern and traditional paintings. I talked with the overseer of the Museum, a young and proud Guatemalan, who was quick to point out to me that Guatemalans, like Americans, are nationalistic. He said that there is often confusion between Nationalism and Communism. He added that Guatemalans are proud of their Indian cultural background and Mayan civilization. He reminded me that Indian scientific discoveries were completed before the discovery of America. I learned that the government of Guatemala had been led by military professionals. Castillo Armas was a well known president who led a victory against Communism in 1954. I saw President Armas when he came to Georgetown University to receive an honorary doctorate.

There was little social democracy in Guatemala . Unemployment was in the double digits. Although the city streets looked prosperous, I saw many Indian children wandering throughout the city trying to sell gadgets.

### An Off-duty Trip to Mexico City

I next flew to Mexico City, a short flight and my first visit to Mexico. My arrival at the Mexico City airport was in the evening, but foggy weather conditions offered something mystical about this location. A big billboard lit up with a heartwarming sign, FELIZ NAVIDAD (Happy Christmas). It made me feel welcomed and at home.

It took only a few moments to get cleared through Mexican immigration and customs. In Mexico City I checked into the Geneva, one of the older hotels, near La Reforma in the center of the capital. It is a colonial style hotel, not far from the main tourist sites. I took a long walk by myself and liked what I saw: a city with architectural characteristics like Paris, Madrid and New York. What most impressed me were the throngs of people roaming the streets.

## Library of Congress

At the National Archeological Museum I admired remnants of the city's Aztec past. The Aztecs had built a temple where the present Presidential Palace is located, and where the Spaniards conquered Mexico and made it into a more commercial city. They started by building roads. The Valley of Mexico was at one time a large lake with eight islands. This is why the city is still sinking today. Many national projects are underway to prevent the Mexican national shrines from sinking further.

The Liberty Bell on top of the front door of the Presidential Palace in Dolores was used by Mexican patriot Father Hidalgo when he appealed to Mexicans to free themselves from the Spaniards. In the Palace one can admire the paintings by Diego Rivera. No painter in Mexico has had a greater impact on the Mexican character (psyche) than Rivera. His murals depict the life of early Mexican civilization prior to the Cortez' invasion and show Mexico's history and struggle for independence. They depict a heroic people with a distinct historic past. When I asked an average Mexican which way his country would move in the cold war struggle, he replied, "The Mexican way." Jose Clemente Orozco was another painter from the State of Jalisco who reflected Mexico's glorious past and human endurance. His major work, *Hombre del Fuego* (Man of Fire), at the Las Cabañas (Cultural Museum in Guadalajara), dramatizes Mexico's traumas with life and death to its fullest.

December 8, I visited the palace and cathedral in Mexico City built in the 16th century. The golden altar, the Basilica of Our Lady of Guadalupe, is called the Altar of Pardon. The painting in the center of the altar of the Virgin Mary is worth mentioning. It was painted by a prisoner who was condemned by the Inquisition for being an unbeliever. Later on, the church hierarchy had a second look at this man's fate and, in awe of his painting, they concluded that he must have been a man of faith and they pardoned him.

In the Basilica I watched highly skilled craftsmen repairing the golden side altars. In this ancient cathedral Emperor Maximilian and Empress Carlota were crowned. Maximilian was the brother of Francis Joseph of Austria. Empress Carlota, a former Belgian princess, was the daughter of the first king of Belgium, Leopold I. Although they reigned only

## Library of Congress

a short period in Mexico, these monarchs had a strong cultural impact on Mexican society. Various historical works portray Maximilian as a capable military man, but an ineffective sovereign. Carlota is seen as a beloved Empress, but she failed to convince both Napoleon and the Pope to offer military and financial aid to her beleaguered husband, who was shot in a Mexican uprising while she pleaded for help in Europe. They are remembered for their tragic reign and the European court style they introduced at Chapultepec (1864-1867). The only things they left behind at Chapultepec are their French furnishings. This castle, now a national museum, was home to Mexican rulers and presidents until 1935.

Nothing shows the empirical epoch of this reign better than the mural of Juarez's triumphal concept of liberty, which encompasses that political philosophy. Benito Juarez tourist guides often mention Francisco Madero (1873-1913) and Miguel Hidalgo (1753-1811), who rank as Mexican statesmen and Revolutionary martyrs.

Before I left Mexico City I attended a reception of the Panamanian Congress of Pharmacists at the Cristobal Colon Hotel. I had been invited by a good Panamanian friend, Mrs. Doris Blaitry, who was also a pharmacist. My friend Pat Sheridan was also at the Congress.

When I arrived at the Pittsburgh airport I was welcomed by a huge December snow and my parents. My father looked well and I was glad he had recuperated from his recent illness. It was good to spend the Christmas season at "Clayton" with my family.

During my stay in Pittsburgh I drove to Monaca, Pennsylvania, along the Ohio River, to have dinner with Mrs. Scassa and her son, Angelo. They were the mother and brother of my friend Eugene Scassa, who worked with me at the Embassy in Panama. I also talked with Bishop John J. Wright, of Pittsburgh (who later became Cardinal and Vatican official). He told me about his research on the French Saint Joan of Arc, whose statue is in the

## Library of Congress

Catholic cathedral in Pittsburgh. He had been very interested in Joan of Arc's life and had written some books about her.

I attended a lecture of the Caplan Series, of the University of Pittsburgh, by former Governor Thomas E. Dewey, who was Republican presidential candidate in 1948. His topic was "World Peace Through Law." He addressed the issue of an international police force to enforce legal decisions of the International Court of Justice.

### CHAPTER VI Crisis in Panama

When I returned to Panama on New Year's Eve I did not realize that January, 1964, would prove to be an ominous period in US-Panamanian relations. On January 7, some American students from Balboa High School, in the Panama Canal Zone, raised the American flag in front of their school. Two days later, Panamanian students organized a protest march. They entered the Canal Zone, caused property damage, and had a confrontation with the Canal Zone police.

This, my first foreign service crisis, started at four in the afternoon on January 9, and spread throughout Panama City and Colon. It did not reach its climax until midnight. I had gone to bed early that evening, and at 1:15 a.m. Doris Blaitry called to inform me that a revolutionary riot had broken out and that I was in danger. The Embassy had been stoned by a huge mob, she said, the USIS Library burned down, the PAA office sacked, and the Chase Manhattan Bank and the Goodyear plant both seriously damaged. "They are burning American cars and attacking Americans in the streets," she told me.

I called my neighbor and Embassy coworker Gene Mewhorter, who lived in the apartment below me, and we moved our cars out of sight behind the apartment building. Somehow we managed to get to the office where there were about 80 members of the Panamanian Guardia Nacional surrounding our embattled Embassy. They escorted us to the Embassy Communication Center where I worked with Chargé d'Affaires Wallace Stuart for the next several hours. He was in telephone contact with President Johnson and Secretary

## Library of Congress

of State Dean Rusk. Secretary Rusk informed him that the government of Panama had broken diplomatic relations with the United States on January 9 and that we had to destroy classified files and prepare for evacuation. Panamanian diplomats in Washington were also ordered home.

The last minutes before we abandoned our Embassy I stood next to the Chargé when he sent out our last message to the State Department. For the next few days I stayed in seclusion at the residence of our administrative officer, Thomas Huff, whose house was guarded. In retrospect, I think the Panamanian National Guard did a good job protecting our embassy and staff.

The rioting ended January 12. Four American soldiers were killed and twenty Panamanian rioters were also dead. It appeared that Fidel Castro had helped the rioters with supplies and propaganda tools. Under pressure from University of Panama students, Panamanian President Roberto Chiari firmly stated that relations with the US would not be renewed unless it agreed to negotiate a new treaty with Panama on the Canal. The 1903 Canal treaty gave Panama its independence from Colombia and the US the right to run the Panama Canal in perpetuity. Thomas Mann, Under Secretary of State for Latin American Affairs, had been dispatched by President Johnson to talk things over with President Chiari.

January 17, we were all evacuated to the Canal Zone and I stayed nine days at the Canal Zone College. Although diplomatic relations were ruptured, consular relations with Panama were not affected. On January 19 I reported back to work. Consul Henry Taylor, appointed principal officer of our Consulate, told us to conduct business as usual. We issued visas, took care of crew lists, and rendered assistance to American citizens. Consul Taylor advised us to cooperate with the public to project a positive US image, which, in Panama, depended on how well the US Consulate would operate. Our post was the only non-diplomatic consular contact with the Panamanian public. It was a pressure filled job, given the confused state of US-Panamanian affairs.

## Library of Congress

January 23, 1964, the State Department cabled us that we could operate as a Consulate with eight consular officials and ten American staff, of which I was one. I could have asked for a transfer but I decided to stay in Panama to continue my duties at this critical time. Other embassy personnel would also remain in the Canal Zone. Some people were transferred to Washington, including my friend, Vice Consul Joe Martinez.

A few days later Consular personnel were instructed to return to their homes in Panama. We had to replace our American car plates with Panamanian plates for security reasons. All American cars in Panama were easy targets for terrorists and anti-US demonstrators. For a few more weeks we continued an inconspicuous social life. The situation remained sensitive as there were strong feelings on both sides. I was very concerned about the long range effects this crisis would have on any future relations with Panama. There were serious concerns in Panama and the Canal Zone that a coup d'état or Communist takeover were plausible possibilities. The US government was particularly concerned about the security of the Panama Canal itself. Many of the dependents of US military personnel in the Canal Zone had also been evacuated. This move caused an economic crisis of its own. Many US service families lived in Panama. Their sudden exit resulted in 1000 vacant apartments there.

I served with Virgil Prichard, Frank Barrett, Mark Cantolla, Joe Martinez, Don McConville, and Myra Hilpert. We were an effective team during a sensitive period in our relations with Panama. We became a closely knit family and would often visit each others' homes. One of our priorities was the preparation, in case of an emergency evacuation, of files on all US citizens living in Panama. We had many US citizens who had lived in Panama for many years. For example, there was Sven Fahlgen and his American wife, Angie. Sven was a local businessman and also Consul of Sweden. Angie was an American and a longtime employee at the US Embassy in Panama. Because of the rupture of relations between the United States and Panama, she was one of several jurists studying the conflict. She



## Library of Congress

worked for the International Commission of Jurists, an organ of the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations, in Geneva.

Sven told me that the January riots had created an economic crisis in Panama. He pointed out that property values had decreased fifty percent and that foreign investors had been withdrawing their assets from the banks. Mr. Wedge, a British national who represented Rolls Royce, confirmed this.

In spite of the tension in Panama there were some good moments to reflect on. A good friend who was a medical student, Elly Abad, and his family, offered me friendship and hospitality. During the first days of the crisis, when we were in physical danger, they opened their home to me for refuge and solace. We also had Toni Linares, our Spanish teacher, who was also a true friend. He continued to give us Spanish lessons. Toni made a special effort to improve our conversational Spanish and gave us deep insights into Panamanian culture and customs.

The fact that presidential elections were imminent in Panama did not resolve our problems. Candidates Marcos Robles, Galindo, and Dr. Arnulfo Arias were the front runners. Robles, of the Liberal party, and prot#g# of President Chiari, finally won the election. Arnulfo Arias claimed that there had been widespread fraud in the interior of Panama and that many votes had been bought.

It is normal diplomatic protocol overseas to communicate with the foreign ministry of the host country through an exchange of notes. Since the break of our diplomatic relations with Panama, Foreign Minister Galileo Solis had sent instructions that, effective immediately, all consular notes for the Foreign Ministry would have to be submitted in Spanish. We had always sent our notes in English and the Foreign Ministry would reply in Spanish. This was another move to press their sovereignty issue in the Canal Zone.

In early February, 1964, the US-Panamanian crisis was being debated in the Organization of American States (OAS) in Washington, in whose purview it was to try to mediate such

## Library of Congress

conflicts in the western hemisphere. President Johnson's speech before the OAS was reassuring. The crisis had some repercussions in Latin America, like the burning of the US flag in Medellin, Colombia, in protest against visiting Canal Zone military personnel. There were also many high ranking Latin American military who came periodically to study at US military schools. The University of Panama, whose Rector, Narciso Garay, had resigned, was often a source of leftist minded students and anti-US feelings. This time around the unrest became more intense, thus I discontinued my evening course.

The Catholic Church in Panama had its influence on both politics and Panamanian life. In March, 1964, my friend Marcos McGrath, Bishop of Panama, was appointed as Bishop of Santiago, Veraguas, a growing province and hotbed of communism and left-wingers. Bishop McGrath had been very successful with the progressive elements of the church. In a strange tour de force, the Vatican had appointed Thomas Clavel of David, Chiriqui, to replace the late Dutch born Archbishop of Panama, Monsignor J. Beckmann. I always thought that Bishop McGrath would have been the favorite candidate for that job, given his excellent ties with both Panama and the Canal Zone. He has since returned to Panama City as Archbishop.

On April 3, 1964, Panama and the United States agreed to resume diplomatic relations and to discuss the differences which had arisen from the 1903 Canal Treaty. Panamanian Foreign Minister Galileo Solis sent a cable to Secretary of State Dean Rusk, who replied by telephone, thus constituting a formal exchange of diplomatic notes. This opened a new chapter in US-Panamanian relations and, consequently, there was much activity at our Embassy. An array of US officials arrived to confer with Consul Henry Taylor and Canal Zone authorities. President Johnson now appointed his own choice of Ambassador, Jack Hood Vaughn, former Peace Corps Director in Latin America, as our new Envoy to Panama. Now that we were functioning as an embassy again, principal officer Henry Taylor remained Chargé d'Affaires until Mr. Vaughn's confirmation by the Senate. There

## Library of Congress

was a feeling of relief in Panama, and we felt we could go on with our normal embassy duties.

It was generally felt that President Johnson had handled the crisis well. The big job lay ahead to narrow US-Panamanian differences on Canal Zone issues. The President sent former Secretary of the Treasury, Robert Anderson (a Republican), as special emissary for the bilateral talks. This was widely supported by the Panamanian press. However, it would take more than ten years before these issues were finally resolved during President Jimmy Carter's administration.

April 20, Ambassador Vaughn received us at the Ambassador's residence. His effort to speak to us in English and Spanish on the importance of the Alliance for Progress made a good impression on both US and Panamanian staffs.

A few days later I accepted an English teaching job at the North American-Panamanian Association, referred to as the Bi-National Center. It was an American-sponsored society to promote better relations between the United States and Panama. There are many such centers in Latin America and other countries. The two-month assignment was to teach two evening classes, Monday through Friday. There were thirteen students in each class. This, combined with my new Consular position, was a challenge indeed. My Panamanian students were very eager to learn English, many taking time out from their work to attend classes. It gave me the opportunity to exchange ideas with them during a critical stage of US-Panamanian relations. I had to correct papers and prepare classes until midnight, but the rewards were great. Until the end of July I was kept busy with teaching English. In addition to my regular evening schedule I had special classes for Carlos Rodriguez, Secretary General of the Ministry of Education in Panama. Irma Jimenez and Mrs. Smith, of the Bi-National Center, told me that I was one of the first teachers who made them study well. One student, who was a captain of the Guardia Nacional, was the grandson of former Panamanian President Arosemena.

## Library of Congress

Although Embassy operations returned to pre-January stability we had a few political skirmishes in Panama. One began with the First of May parade in Plaza Santa Ana, which is like our Labor Day rallies. It was, in part, related to the May 10 presidential elections. Terrorist acts were being directed against oligarchies and vested interests. The Panamanian Ambassador to the U.N., Aquilino Boyd, shot Mr. Calvo, the editor of La Hora paper. The feud between the two caused a stoppage of newspaper printing for twenty four hours. Diplomat Boyd had been a controversial political figure for years. He had lost in the 1959 election and was said to have desecrated the American flag.

There was also an assassination attempt on Tito Arias (husband of ballerina Margot Fonteyn). He had just been elected to the Panamanian National Assembly. The attacker was his best friend, Alfredo Jimenez. Arias remained in a coma for a long time, but survived. Margot Fonteyn canceled her scheduled performances in Bath, England, to be with her husband. He remained paralyzed as his wife took him to Europe for therapy, but he never left his wheelchair. Later they retired to their ranch in Panama.

On June 5, a bomb was thrown in front of the Peace Corps office. This was not an isolated incident and did not stop President-elect Marcos Robles from visiting Washington officials. We had issued him and his entourage official visas.

Many college disturbances were the order of the day in the United States and abroad. Our involvement in Vietnam caused protest marches in many large cities. President Johnson appeared the likely Democratic Party choice for President against Republican Senator Barry Goldwater, of Arizona. Goldwater had built a reputation for conservative leadership in his party and had received some acclaim from his book, *The Conscience of a Conservative*.

July 4, 1964, leftist students threw red paint on the facade of our Embassy. This incident did not interfere with our Independence Day celebrations. All Embassy personnel had been invited to attend the 4th of July "Classic" at President Ramon Racetrack. I chose to

## Library of Congress

go swimming that day and to get some sun. Afterwards I visited the St. Augustine Church, near the Simon Bolivar Institute in downtown Panama City.

One of the prime social events of the summer was the Governor of the Canal Zone's invitation to our Ambassador and staff to join him on the governor's yacht to cruise the Canal and visit the Miraflores locks. It was an impressive cruise of the Panama Canal at night with a buffet dinner on board and Panamanian music. Bad feelings on both sides of the US-Panamanian political spectrum began to melt.

In late May, 1964, the Department had brought us up to date on how to implement the Supreme Court's decision in the celebrated *Schneider vs. Rusk* case. It involved a German-born woman who was living in Germany, but who would now be able to retain her US citizenship obtained through naturalization. The High Court had invalidated longstanding Sections 352 (a) (1) and (2) of the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1952. These sections of the law did not permit naturalized US citizens to live abroad without losing their US citizenship. Prior to this decision, a naturalized American citizen could lose citizenship after residing three years in the country of birth and five years in any other foreign country. This decision went into effect June 13, 1964. We tried to notify many persons in our Consular district and invited them to appear before a Consular officer for a reinstatement. This was a historic landmark case for naturalized citizens. It protected them from losing their US citizenship if, for compelling family reasons, they had to return to their country of birth. It did away with a second class US citizenship.

The State Department also notified me that I had been assigned to the American Embassy in London and would have to report for duty in September, following home leave. As with other departing foreign service employees, they scheduled a complete medical exam for me at Gorgas Hospital in the Canal Zone.

Virgil and Charlotte Prichard had arranged a large buffet dinner for me on July 29. Charlotte asked me for a list of persons I would like to have at this farewell party. I chose

## Library of Congress

those who had worked closely with us in the Consular section in the past year and had contributed to American citizens' interests. Unfortunately, the reception had to be canceled at the last minute. The husband of one of our senior Panamanian employees, Mrs. Carmen Fabreza, had accidentally shot himself while cleaning his rifle. He died instantly. We all attended the funeral service at Cristo Rey Church instead.

After two and a half years at my first post I felt that there was so much work to be done in Panama. It lies at the crossroads of the world. Much of the political and economic success in Latin America would depend on the strategic stability of Panama, given the importance of the Canal.

On July 28 I was invited for a despedida get together by my students at the Continental Hotel. This was preceded by a teachers' staff party at the Bi-National Center. It was sad to say goodbye to many good friends. I had a personal meeting with Ambassador Jack Vaughn and his Deputy Chief of Mission Ruphus Smith. I had lunch with my Brazilian friend Matos, and Eugene Klebenov, who was a political officer, hosted a cocktail party.

On August 1, 1964, I boarded the Santa Mariana (of the McCormick Line) in the Canal Zone. Virgil and Charlotte Prichard and some close friends came to my cabin to say farewell. The Mariana had 120 passengers on board — mostly tourists and business and government officials. The first day we experienced rough waters after leaving Panama Canal. We were sailing through the Westwind passage between the islands of Cuba and Haiti. The cabins on Deck A were comfortable and the food was superb. At my table sat an interesting couple, Mr. and Mrs. Jordan, who had worked with the USAID mission in Quito, Ecuador, and were also going on home leave. I also met two women teachers from New York. Everyone felt relaxed and it was easy to make new friends. The "Gold" dinner with the Captain was the highlight of the trip. We all danced until one in the morning but were interrupted by an address by President Johnson on the North Vietnamese attacks on our ships in the Tonkin Gulf. He explained the US Government's reasons for retaliation. I could

## Library of Congress

not remember such a firm presidential commitment since President Truman's speech on his military action in Korea in 1950.

We docked at the port of Newark, New Jersey, on August 6. I left for Washington, DC by train and went to the State Department Foreign Service Lounge to sign in. Foreign Service persons register there and prepare for appointments in the Department. I met Mrs. Fiebiech, of the European Assignment Branch, who briefed me on communications duties at the Embassy in London. I also met Anne Clark, who was a personnel specialist in the State Department, and Mr. Whittaker of Consular Affairs. I also had some discussions with Edythe Watson, of Records Management, and Mr. Heill, of the Bureau of Intelligence and Research.

During these consultations, I was able to arrange my travel plans to London. I also saw Choung, my Korean friend from Georgetown, who related some of his teaching experiences at Radford College, Virginia. Of all my Georgetown classmates, he was one of the most ambitious. His ultimate goal in life was to get involved in the implementation of international law. He had a strong background of family support, as his father was the former Minister of Fisheries in the South Korean government.

I also had lunch with my good friends Jim and Virginia De Crocco. Jim worked in US Army Intelligence and Virginia had studied Asian art and culture. They were avid readers and after our visit at Bassin restaurant on Pennsylvania Avenue they took me to the Benjamin Franklin Bookshop to browse.

### CHAPTER VII London, 1964-1966 Home leave and a Canadian Trip Before Reassignment

Home leave is mandatory following each overseas assignment. It helped me to reacquaint myself with the ever changing American cultural, political and social aspects of life. Many foreign service professionals call it re-Americanization. It helps us to become better interpreters of American policy and values at the next port. Pittsburgh was undergoing

## Library of Congress

many urban changes, from an industrial to a cultural urban center. It became a prototype of what a contemporary American city's infrastructure should be like.

On August 19, after a week of rest with my family at "Clayton," I traveled by Greyhound bus from Pittsburgh to Montreal, Quebec. We rode through Erie, Buffalo, and Toronto. The Canadian scenery was vast and impressive. I arrived in Montreal the next day and, after a good night's rest, took a city tour. We drove through the financial and commercial district, which is a combination of older buildings and modern skyscrapers. The city of Montreal is a busy and beautiful metropolis. Most people speak French and English, and are very friendly with tourists. I will always remember the gold leaf work in the main altars of Notre Dame Church and the Sacred Heart Chapel. It was built in 1688, and is one of the oldest churches in Canada. We were told that no nails had been used to finish the inside construction. The beautiful stained glass windows were made in Limoges, France. The two towers of the Cathedral represent Temperance and Perseverance. In the Wax Museum I saw the figures of early Canadian history. We stopped at McGill University and St. Joseph's before visiting the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts, which has a good collection of European paintings.

I continued on to Quebec City, capital of the Province of Quebec and seat of the provincial government. It is a quaint, old city on the St. Lawrence River, which reminded me of some of the old European towns. Quebec City has French architectural characteristics: fortresses, narrow streets, small grocery shops and restaurants, and the imposing Frontenac Chateau. In Quebec the French colonists have left their unique personality. French is predominantly spoken in Quebec, and I enjoyed talking with people in the streets. It is undoubtedly the most interesting city in Canada. Champlain, whose statue is in front of the Chateau de Frontenac, founded the city of Quebec in 1608. In 1759 the English took over. Frontenac was the second governor of New France. In the city park stands a statue of Joan of Arc (1409-1431). I enjoyed the Citadel, where I could walk around and take pictures. This was where W.L. Mackenzie King, Liberal Prime Minister of



## Library of Congress

Canada (1935-1948), Franklin D. Roosevelt, and Winston Churchill met during World War II.

The next day we drove about twenty two miles through peaceful countryside with the St. Lawrence River on one side and on the other the Laurentian mountains, which stretch from Labrador to the Great Lakes. After a short ride we visited St. Anne de Beaupré, a well visited pilgrimage site.

In the evening I went to the American Consulate General to visit my friend, Irene Stancik, who was the Personnel Officer in Panama. Irene was stationed in Quebec and lived in a lovely, furnished apartment in the Consulate building, overlooking the St. Lawrence. It was good to see her again and we reminisced about our experiences in Panama during a French meal at the Savoy. Afterwards I left by bus for the Canadian capital. Ottawa and Quebec City are as different as day and night. In Ottawa everything is in English: customs, food, clothing, appearance, and language. The parliament building in Ottawa is a replica of the British parliament. We entered the House of Commons and the Senate. The senators are appointed for life, and the deputies for a period of five years. I liked the speaker's chair, which has a unicorn, the emblem of pre-revolutionary France, and a lion, the symbol of England emblazoned on it. These appear also on the entrance columns of parliament and represent the two prevailing cultures in Canada.

Our bus also took us to Embassy row. In the House of Commons are portraits of Lord Beaverbrook, King Edward VII, Queen Alexandra, George V, Queen Mary, and Queen Victoria. The library of Parliament is a treasure, comparable to our own Library of Congress. It behooves a serious student of American history to visit the Canadian government buildings.

When I returned to Pittsburgh, I spent the remainder of my home leave with my parents. August 31, I met with Bishop John Wright in his office on the Boulevard of the Allies. He

## Library of Congress

gave me, as always, good counsel for my future foreign service travels. It was the last time I would see him before he went to the Vatican and a few years later passed away.

On September 1, 1964, my parents and I were invited by Miss Frick to accompany her for a visit to the Henry Clay Frick Fine Arts building at the University of Pittsburgh. Miss Frick taught us about the frescos of Nicholas Lochoff she had purchased. They are twelve Italian masterpieces of the 14th and 15th centuries. They are placed on large walls in a cloister setting, inspired by the Florentine Renaissance. Bernard Berenson, who intervened to acquire this collection, opined: "These are the closest imaginable to the creations of the original artists."

Much planning had gone into this well located Frick art gallery. It was an ongoing education for me to learn how the Frick family and other American art collectors had contributed in their acquisition of European paintings.

### London in the Springtime

In Panama, when I first learned of my assignment to London, many of my colleagues told me of their envy — that they would have accepted this post under any circumstances because of the educational advantages it offers. On this positive note I left Pittsburgh on September 24, 1964. The following day, Pat Sheridan, with whom I had worked in Panama, met me at Heathrow Airport. The airport is about one hour's drive from the center of London. I had a good look at the hectic traffic jams that would be a daily occurrence for the next two years. On the drive to downtown I could not help but think that my life would be totally different from the way it was in Panama City. I had really never worked in a big metropolis.

The Embassy put me up in the Court Mansion apartment on West End Lane, a forty-five minute bus ride by bus from the Embassy. These were temporary living quarters, with two bedrooms and a kitchen, which I shared with Don Ivanich, another Embassy

## Library of Congress

communications employee from Chicago. Since we were both new to this city, together we explored the many historic sites.

Shortly after my arrival I spent a few hours briefing and meeting communications and security colleagues at the embassy. I had to sign the Ambassador's guest book. The Embassy is an impressive modern Georgian complex located on Grosvenor Square, and is one of our largest embassies. It is like a miniature of the State Department in Washington. In Grosvenor Square one feels a sense of the past. On one corner stands a building which General Dwight D. Eisenhower used as his headquarters during World War II. The High Commission of Canada and the Embassy of Indonesia had their Chanceries there. Also in the Square, Benjamin Franklin's statue provides a powerful presence of the United States' first ambassador to Paris.

I would often spend my lunch hour in Grosvenor Square, relaxing after the hustle and bustle of the day. I spent about two hours going back and forth to work each day, and got used to the traffic jams and crowded streets. After a few weeks I did not mind it, but it took me awhile to get used to the subway (or the "tube" as they call it in London) and buses. Since I decided not to have a car in London, I had to learn to depend on the intricate public transport system. Subways stopped running past midnight, as they were being checked then for maintenance and repair.

I was assigned to Communications, where I would be part of a four man team to handle diplomatic courier mail for the Embassy and dependent US Consulates in Great Britain. I would also be responsible for diplomatic courier trips to US Consulates in England, Ireland and Scotland. I worked with experienced communications personnel: Ed and Bill Moody, and Joe Forry. We also had a very loyal British staff of about five persons. We would take turns going to Liverpool, Southampton, and Birmingham. From time to time, our families would get together for dinner.

## Library of Congress

Living in London proved to be quite expensive. I didn't mind it that much since there was always something interesting to do or to visit. It is a city that offers much to feed the intelligence. Embassy personnel had commissary privileges, and we took advantage of this. Ed Moody took me to the Air Force Commissary at Ruislip, about an hour by subway from London. Ed had served in Tokyo and Rangoon, and shared his experiences with us. His wife, Dorothy, was born in England and became a good friend of Ma##t#.

Don and I took a boat ride on the Thames, from Trafalgar Square to the Tower of London. The Trafalgar monument honors the British forces under Admiral Nelson, who defeated the French and Spanish fleets in 1805. The monument has Egyptian architectural characteristics.

I quickly learned that going to the movies in London was a fine pastime. I often went to such classical theaters as the Plaza Theater, on Regent Street, and the Empire Theater, on Leicester Square. English movie theaters have richly decorated antique furnishings inside. These theaters reminded me of the old movie house Vieux Bruges (old Bruges), where my mother took me as a child. In some areas of British theaters people can smoke. There were different seat prices. In some theaters in Bruges, I remember, they served coffee.

Whenever I could get away from my job I visited the National Gallery on Trafalgar Square. It is a marvelous place to savor various European paintings. It was not possible to absorb all the details in one visit.

On October 7, 1964, I joined the new staff members for orientation in the Embassy auditorium. Veteran Ambassador David Bruce welcomed us. He had wide expertise at large embassies, having been the ambassador in Paris and Bonn, as well as Under Secretary of State. He referred to the huge apparatus of modern diplomacy and compared our embassy in London to "the little State Department." He explained US foreign policy goals in Great Britain, and warned us not to be "overenthusiastic, nor overcritical."

## Library of Congress

Public Affairs Officer William Clark, and Findley Burns, Counselor for Administration, echoed his remarks. They left us with the impression that we should try to emulate the British, “who never criticize their government's policies overseas.”

As a practical, administrative matter, Mr. Burns told us that embassy personnel were on the Sheriff's list in London, which entitled us to many diplomatic privileges, but he warned us not to abuse these benefits because the Ambassador has the right “to withdraw them as he saw fit.”

Early on in my London assignment we had general elections. Compared to voting in Panama the previous May, the election on October 16, 1964 was orderly and had a heavy turnout. The British voters reflect the serenity of their democratic political process. The Labor party scored a narrow victory over the Conservatives (Tory party), which had ruled the country for the past thirteen years.

An article in Stars and Stripes, the US Army daily, published in West Germany, in the issue dated October 31, 1964, referred to “the parliamentary procedures of Great Britain [as] being exacting, historic, and democratic.” This was Queen Elizabeth's first socialist parliament of her reign.

In the early 1960s Western Europe had emerged as a strong economic and industrial power. Trade between France and other European nations, on one hand, and with the Soviet Union on the other, spurred this growth. This did not quickly result in a European political union. Economic rivalries and age old jealousies prevented such political harmony. This was also true about foreign policy issues affecting the Atlantic Alliance. The European Economic Market (EEC) was signed in Rome on March 25, 1957. Signs of opposition to it were felt in the fall and winter of 1964. Great Britain was not in the EEC, but had joined another organization, the Countries of the Outer Seven (EFTA), of which England was the leader. France's difficulties with West Germany over agricultural subsidization policies lay at the root of the problem. The EEC later became the European Community (EC).

## Library of Congress

At the Embassy we did not worry that the Labor Party's victory would affect US-British foreign policy relations. Historically, Great Britain and the United States have been close allies. Since World War II this bond has grown more deeply. While these political events took place in London along with Harold Wilson's ascent as prime minister, Chairman Nikita Khrushchev was mysteriously removed from power in Moscow. This was a new challenge for Russian experts in Washington and NATO, trying to understand how this would affect our relations with the Soviets. When Stalin died in 1953 there was also a reshuffling of top leaders.

Our own presidential elections, on November 4, 1964, gave the expected landslide to President Johnson. The President had been the favorite at Whitehall and with the British public. I listened to Senator Robert Kennedy deliver a campaign victory speech over the Armed Forces Radio broadcast from Frankfurt.

That same day I took my first diplomatic courier trip to Southampton and Birmingham. These trips would become a monthly routine. The Embassy driver took us to Waterloo station, and we traveled in first class for security reasons. The three hour train ride gave us a chance to see the beautiful English countryside.

In Southampton I was met by the US Vice Consul. We had some coffee in the restaurant, where we had a little time to talk and transact courier business. After our meeting I continued on to Birmingham, where a Consulate car waited for me. Our Consulate was located in the Chamber of Commerce Building. There I met Consuls Alice T. Curran and Marguerite Whitehead, longtime foreign service officers.

In early November I volunteered for other important diplomatic courier assignments in London. On one occasion, I delivered a confidential letter from Ambassador Bruce to the Prime Minister's office on 10 Downing Street. I entered the main red carpeted hall and was immediately ushered in by three assistants who receive diplomatic mail. The same trip included a visit to the Ministry of Transport.

## Library of Congress

When I returned to Birmingham on December 1, 1964, I visited the Arcade Shopping Center near Snowhill Station and the municipal art gallery, which has many Italian, English and Spanish paintings. The Gainsborough School is of special interest to me. I learned that Birmingham was a pioneer in the organization of this municipal art gallery.

Our Embassy in London was a frequent stopover for US politicians and Congressmen, which increased our workload. They often had to be picked up at the airport and then taken to various points of interest. It was a common joke at the Embassy that these missions were "shopping trips." London was often the first stopover for State Department officials, who needed to consult with their British counterparts before negotiating with the Soviets.

In late November, 1964, Under Secretary of State George Ball arrived in London for talks with members of the newly elected Wilson government. There was also a scheduled meeting with French Foreign Minister Couve de Murville. As on other occasions, the Ambassador's residence was the site where the Bruces played host to the Ball party. The main foreign policy challenge of President Johnson was our bilateral relations with the Soviet Union following the Cuban crisis and the Khrushchev exit.

I was able to find a place to live before Christmas, and moved to an apartment on Hollycroft Avenue in Hampstead. It was an upstairs (near the attic) apartment and the ceilings gave an embracing charm to the living quarters. (I was married in London, to Jeanne Marie Therese "Ma#t#" Poirier of Le Verdon sur Mer, and our daughter Rebecca was also born there.) Mr. and Mrs. David Sacker were our landlords. David was an attorney and Mrs. Sacker was a charming Indian born lady. From the beginning they made us feel at home. It was a tranquil area of the London suburbs, within walking distance to the Heath, a park where we used to take our daughter to get some fresh air.

London is a psychologically warm city to be in. People are particularly courteous and helpful to foreigners. In early December, merchants on Oxford and Regent streets, and at

## Library of Congress

Piccadilly Circus, put up Christmas decorations. On weekends, we explored the English countryside by train.

Our USIS Library at the Embassy was also showing historical documents of the signing of the Treaty of Ghent (1814), which had brought an end to the 1812 war between Great Britain and the United States. The British public at large was enthusiastic about our library, and since they were avid readers, were well informed about American public policies and cultural events.

London is like a crossroad to the world. I met new friends and visited with those of years before. I had luncheon with Jacques Berthoud, who had lived in London for many years. He was a cousin of a Flemish former classmate. Jacques had been teaching French and was a theater correspondent for *La Tribune de Gene#ve*. I used to read his articles when I lived in Geneva.

On December 5, 1964, I was the guest of Miss Eva Fenton at her apartment in Chelsea (which was once the fashionable district of London). I had been introduced to her through a Foreign Service friend in Jamaica. Miss Fenton was very knowledgeable about British government affairs and was a friend of Sir Winston Churchill and the Queen Mother. As a chemist, she had worked in the Department of War, of which Mr. Churchill was then the head. In 1917, during World War I, she was sent to America to plead the English case for US intervention in the war against Germany. She toured the United States for many months, giving propaganda lectures everywhere. She recalled that she visited many US factories to explain matters relating to the use of gas and explosives. "America did not have experience in this sort of thing, then, in World War I," she said.

Her life story was fascinating and full of coincidences. She had been a personal guest of President Woodrow Wilson at the White House, and of Mrs. Cornelius Vanderbilt. She had dined several times at the home of Henry Clay Frick, on Fifth Avenue, and had met Miss Helen Frick and her brother, Childs.



## Library of Congress

I made another new friend, Father Victor, Superior of the Carmelite Convent, on Kensington Church Street. He was introduced by Father Cyril Bernard, my family's friend, who lived at the Mother House of the Carmelite Order, on Piazza Pancrazio, in Rome. Father Victor showed me every corner of the cloister, including the kitchen. During our long talk he shared his knowledge of British psychology and Catholic Church history. He was proud to say that the Carmelite Priory in London had a public church which was involved in parish work. He explained the two Carmelite Orders: his Order belongs to the Reformed one founded by St. Teresa of Avila; the other is of St. John of the Cross, co-partner in the propagation of the Faith with "deep attachment to the original rule." The Carmelite order is under the authority of the Bishop as far as church work is concerned in the diocese, as are other orders. But, he was quick to add, the Carmelite superiors have independence to manage the internal affairs of their monasteries.

London is famous for its exquisite French and foreign restaurants. I used to go to La R#colte, on Duke Street. Since it was located near the Embassy, it was a good place to meet friends for lunch.

I met Phan Wannemether, First Secretary of the Royal Thai Embassy, in London, on December 21. We had a mutual friend, Chuay Kannawat, with whom I went to school in Puerto Rico. Phan was busy preparing for a pending visit of the Thai Foreign Minister, who would stop in London after some business at the U.N. We talked about Thailand and Vietnam. Phan shared my concern over the bombings of USIS installations in many sensitive posts in the world. He tried to reassure me that, "The United States was going through a change in its history and the attacks on our Foreign Service posts have to be taken in that context."

In retrospect I am aware that my active social life in London was a result of a wide range of contacts I had made in Panama and elsewhere before joining the Foreign Service. I became convinced that meeting leaders in political, religious and cultural life enhanced

## Library of Congress

my education and learning process. A Foreign Service officer will always be a student and educator in public policy.

Ambassador Bruce had left the Embassy for the holidays, and Minister Philip Kaiser was *chargé d'affaires ad interim*. From time to time he would come in to chat with us in the office of Communications and he also attended our Embassy Staff Christmas Party. I spent my first Christmas in London with Mr. and Mrs. Sacker and their two daughters. It was a privilege to be invited to a traditional turkey dinner and become a part of an English family's celebration, as it brought back many memories of Christmases spent with my own parents.

The day after Christmas is "Boxing Day" in Great Britain and is a national holiday. It is a custom to give gifts to service personnel, household help, postmen, and people who have rendered services during the year. The traditional giving is observed from the royal family down to the average English household. New Year's Day is not a holiday in England. All shops are open and everyone goes to work. Scotland is an exception, where the New Year is celebrated with a bang.

During the holidays we visited Charles and Eileen Chiddick, who became wonderful friends. We often came together in their home or our apartment. It was a coincidence that Charles and Eileen had been friends of Father Cyril Bernard in Rome. Charles had been a successful insurance agent and they traveled every summer to the south of France, as do many English families.

Since we had a well organized work team at the Embassy, with less overtime and weekend duty as at most small foreign service posts, I was able to do more visiting and sightseeing in London. On January 2, 1965, I was invited for tea by John Carmel Heenan, Archbishop of the Catholic Diocese of Westminster. My friend, Marcos McGrath, of Panama, had introduced me to him. He spent more than an hour with me.

## Library of Congress

I was met at the Archbishop's palace by his secretary, Monsignor Kent, who escorted me to the second floor reception room. As I walked through this richly decorated Chancery I was impressed by the many pictures of known church leaders. I was impressed to have met this aesthetic church leader who showed me extraordinary kindness. We first had some small talk and, since he knew I had been brought up in Bruges, said that Monsignor Emile De Smedt, of Bruges, had come to his enthronement. He was proud to say that his niece was married to a Belgian citizen.

His comments on the substance of the Catholic Church's policy was revealing. He was an outspoken critic of the hurried stand taken on liberalization in the Church's birth control policies. He told me that the Pope was searching through channels of qualified doctors and scientists to find an answer to many queries coming from all parts of the Catholic world. He thought that the church might possibly approve the use of pills which could regulate the existing "rhythm" system of contraception. He remarked that Cardinal Suenens of Belgium had made some very progressive statements on birth control which the Pope made him retract. On other Vatican II reforms, Heenan referred to the use of new uniforms for religious Sisters. He did not think such outward details were a serious concern for the Church and that Sisters should be allowed to wear old fashioned or contemporary clothes. He was much in favor of allowing Sisters to visit their families.

When I asked Archbishop Heenan what all the changes meant, he said that the liberalism prevalent in Holland, Belgium, France, and West Germany, resulted from moral suffering and oppression under Hitler's occupation. He added that the Resistance movements during World War II had made people lie, cheat, murder, and conceal. "Generations of these countries have changed their values," he opined. He was concerned that confusion had swayed the minds of the young. He dispelled clichés of conservatives and liberals, and felt that the Church needed to weigh every moral issue on its own merits.

On January 24, 1963, Prime Minister Winston Churchill died. All flags were put at half mast by order of the Queen. Arrangements were underway for a State funeral. Our Embassy

## Library of Congress

prepared itself in the event President Johnson would attend. It so happened that Secretary of State Dean Rusk led the official US delegation. Former President Eisenhower and Supreme Court Chief Justice Earl Warren also attended. Our Communications Center had its hands full serving messages to the Hilton, where Secretary Rusk stayed, and to the Dorchester, where General Eisenhower was lodged.

The funeral rites at St. Paul's Cathedral were watched by millions on T.V. The funeral cortege and church services represented British protocol, splendor, and efficiency. These state occasions are intrinsically linked with the British crown and people, and are part of the historic fabric of this nation. The playing of The Battle Hymn of the Republic in St. Paul's was a poignant moment to honor Sir Winston Churchill's Honorary American citizenship.

It was while I served in London that attacks on our Embassies and Consulates became the order of the day. It seemed evident that it would become more dangerous to do our job overseas. We experienced several demonstrations in front of our own Embassy, which reflected the political mood at home. President Johnson's leadership suffered setbacks by the domestic political opposition to the war in Vietnam. The Soviet Union used every propaganda tool abroad to deflect US policies in Southeast Asia. The war in Vietnam was also causing a huge deficit in our balance of payments situation. Some financial experts asserted that the "gold backing" of the US dollar was not tenable, given the fact that we had so much money invested in foreign aid and military expenditures. It was also exacerbating our rate of inflation.

London is a storehouse of culture and history. This again became evident to me when I walked into the Tate Art Gallery, in Millbank, which has many English paintings by Turner, Constable, Reynolds, and Gainsborough. The Rodin sculptures made all the other art work look richer. We also went to Brighton, Sussex, to see the Royal Pavilion, a unique royal castle in the downtown area, built by English architect John Nash. Nothing in England is more representative of the Regency period in architecture (1785-1830). We were told

## Library of Congress

that it had been one of the most creative chapters in English history, with the romantic influences of the East being strong elements in that era. The English romantic movement was felt in painting and literature as well. However, if the Royal Pavilion is a monument of architectural excellence, the Wallace Collection, in London, is a treasure house of classical art.

We had lunch with Gerald Cole, a retired engineer, at his apartment in Hove, a suburb of Brighton. He reminisced about his visits in La Sarraz, Switzerland, with Maryke Ogiz, who had been the governess of Miss Frick.

On March 10, 1965, after a six month waiting period, I met Leon Cowles, Counselor for Consular Affairs at the Embassy. He had been a former colleague of Ambassador Scott McLeod in Dublin. He knew of my interest in becoming a Consular Officer. We had a long talk in which he switched from French to Spanish in a way that tested my impromptu skill in those languages. A strong point going for me was that I had completed all the Consular courses at the Foreign Service Institute. He promised he would keep me in mind if and when a vacancy occurred in the Consular field.

Ever since I joined the foreign service in 1961, I never lost my determination to reach that consular goal. At times there were setbacks, but I never deviated from my ultimate goal. I let people, such as Leon Cowles and other area personnel officers in the consular field in Washington, know that I would contribute much in the Consular field.

At the end of April, 1965, President Johnson faced his second foreign policy crisis in the Dominican Republic. A coup d'etat had destabilized the Caribbean country and American citizens were in danger. The President dispatched over one thousand Marines to secure the safe evacuation of American nationals. It was not smooth sailing for the Administration. There were anti-American protests, but many countries felt that President Johnson made a justifiable move to avoid a Communist takeover in that strategic part of the hemisphere.

## Library of Congress

That was not the only matter on the President's mind at that time. Ever since North Vietnamese planes had bombed our Embassy in Saigon, the United States became more deeply involved in the Southeast Asian conflict. We could feel the cable traffic rising in our Embassy's communication center. One day I was asked to go to the British Foreign Office with classified material for Sir Harold Cassia, who was in charge of the American Desk there. I also went to the House of Commons with a confidential dispatch from Ambassador Bruce to Sir Alex Douglas Home, who was Prime Minister Wilson's predecessor and leader of the opposition.

As I walked into the House of Commons I could sense the historic importance of this building — the hall of parliamentary democracy that was the precursor of our House of Representatives. In this historic hall, I met Sir Douglas Home's private secretary. On the same trip I went to the Embassy of South Africa with a diplomatic note for Ambassador Dr. De Wet.

Hyde and Regent Parks in April are a delight, full of daffodils, crocus and tulips. Many mothers and nannies take their babies to the parks to get some fresh air. It is a place to enjoy nature and serenity.

In early April I was a guest of Charles Chiddick at the Anglo-Belgian Club, a fashionable club in Belgrave Square, of which he was a member. He said it was a good place to meet his clients. There is a library on the ground floor with many interesting historical and literary Belgian works.

On Easter Sunday, April 19, 1965, we took a train for Bath, a historic city in a picturesque setting. The Roman ruins and hot springs were worth visiting. The fifteenth century Abbey of Bath contains tombs of benefactors. The Royal Crescent and the sunken gardens add to the esthetic flavor of the city.

## Library of Congress

After lunch at the Fernley Hotel we took a bus to the Downside Catholic Abbey at Stratton on Fosse where we visited with the Reverend Abbot Butler of the Benedictine Monastery. The Abbey has a beautiful church and a school that accommodated 550 students.

In the early 1960s, when I was serving in London, American spouses led a traditional diplomatic life of attending social and charitable affairs. To this end, Ma#t# was often included at receptions at the US Embassy residence by Mrs. Evangeline Bruce, where notable figures such as the Director of the American Museum in Bath were guest lecturers. Foreign service wives played a role in assisting senior officers' wives by greeting and mixing with foreign guests. It was only in the 1970s that State Department policies changed, allowing American spouses to seek employment overseas. Many worked at other government agencies or military installations. In the late 1970s Ma#t# worked in the Consular section of the US Embassy in Brussels, and for NATO support offices.

On May 14, 1965, I experienced one of those rare opportunities in my career. I was assigned as Embassy Aide to Senator Robert Kennedy and his family at the Ambassador's residence, where they stayed. Mrs. Jacqueline Kennedy had arrived in London to attend the inauguration ceremony , conducted by Queen Elizabeth and Prince Philip, of the National Kennedy Memorial for the late President John F. Kennedy, at Runnymede, which is the historic site of the signing of the Magna Carta, in 1215, by King John. The Queen had invited Mrs. Kennedy and her children, John and Caroline, for tea after the ceremony at Windsor Castle, also near Runnymede. My duties were to answer all incoming calls for Senator Kennedy and his party.

I occupied a small office near the reception hall on the ground floor of the richly decorated mansion, which heiress Barbara Hutton had given to the US government. During my two-day assignment at the Ambassador's residence, I had the opportunity to talk with Senator Kennedy, who asked me about my job in the Foreign Service. He often dropped into my office and I, in turn, had to page him in the residence if there was a telephone call for him. He was a very intense man, with striking, penetrating eyes. He had all the qualities needed

## Library of Congress

to be a national leader. He was very courteous and down to earth. I talked only briefly with Senator Edward Kennedy and his wife, Joan. I also became acquainted with Mrs. Peter Lawford and Mrs. Steven Smith, sisters of the late President. Ambassador Bruce's wife supervised the Kennedy visit. I spoke to Prince Radziwill on the telephone, who wanted to get in touch with Lee Bouvier, sister of Jacqueline Kennedy. I also had a call for Senator Robert Kennedy from Mrs. Wilson, wife of the Prime Minister.

At that time, Senator Kennedy's name was very much in the forefront of the British press, and had been mentioned as a possible presidential candidate in 1968 or 1972. Political pundits predicted that President Johnson's drop in popularity polls would make a resurgence of Robert Kennedy to oppose Johnson in 1968 — which proved to be true until his assassination in Los Angeles, in 1968. The English papers described him as a formidable and charismatic leader.

London proved to be a special Foreign Service assignment in terms of the possibilities to travel to the continent and the historic sites of England. The Communications Center at our Embassy was adequately staffed at all times for the crises at hand, and American personnel managers encouraged us to take time off, work permitting, to travel. I could never deny myself the educational pleasure of visiting the many art galleries, such as the Wellington Museum. A silver centerpiece drew my special attention. It was a gift by the Portuguese Regent to the Duke of Wellington. It was at the Victoria and Albert Museum, on Brompton, that I discovered an exquisite collection of silver which dates back to the Middle Ages. At the end of May we also visited the Royal Castle of Windsor, where we saw the burial places of former British monarchs. On the same trip we saw the lovely gardens of the former residence of King Henry VIII at Hampton Court.

On the British political home front, Prime Minister Wilson issued a white (policy) paper in May, which was a proposal to renationalize the British steel industry. It was a highly controversial bill that was opposed by the Tories in Parliament. If he failed to win a confidence vote on this issue he would have a rough time keeping his party in power,



## Library of Congress

unlike our Congressional procedure. British political reality is that, when a political party in power fails a parliamentary vote of confidence on a piece of legislation, the Prime Minister can be under pressure to resign — followed by a general election.

In June, 1965, the State Department announced a reorganization of its personnel management program. Over the years, there had been concern that agencies such as USIS, the Agency for International Development (AID), and the Peace Corps, had been excluded from benefits such as uniform retirement benefits, traditionally offered to State Department personnel. The new policy would remedy this.

June 23, I took my first diplomatic courier trip to Liverpool, an important port city of one million inhabitants, with many industrial plants, such as the Ford Motor Company, set up nearby. Many people this century have emigrated to the United States from Liverpool. When our Consulate in Manchester was closed, much of the Visa load was shifted to Liverpool. The Consulate was located in the Cunard Shipping Line, near the pier, giving it a scenic view of the Irish Sea.

After a long talk with Consul General Littsey and Vice Consul Hughes, the Consulate driver took me to the Walker Fine Arts Gallery, where I saw a fine collection of 17th and 18th century European masters. Our Consulates in Southampton and Birmingham were earmarked for closure at the end of 1965, which would leave us with one out-of-town courier trip to Liverpool.

On September 9, Secretary of the Treasury Henry H. Fowler arrived at our Embassy to wind up his European talks relating to the reform of the complex international monetary crisis, and our big deficit in balance of payments. Both US political parties wanted to see an improvement. The Republicans, however, favored a substantial withdrawal of American troops from Western Europe. They claimed that such cuts would save millions of dollars for US taxpayers. Leading editors in the United States also advocated such a move. They felt that the time had come for Western Europe to build up their own military

## Library of Congress

defense against the USSR. President de Gaulle's "Force de Frappe," a French go it alone military program, outside of NATO, was in France's own interest, but many knowledgeable European military policy makers knew that without a strong US backup NATO would not remain a viable option for the security of Europe.

The feud and subsequent cease fire agreement between India and Pakistan and the territory of Kashmir was resolved. My friends Ed and Dorothy Moody were preparing to leave for Karachi. Many foreign service employees would now forego a "plush" job in Western Europe to volunteer in Third World countries in Asia and Africa. In the early 1960s, democracy began to take hold in these areas. Many young governments and vigorous political leaders were seeking improvements for their people. England was experiencing immigration problems of its own. There was a constant flux of people from the British Commonwealth seeking jobs in cities such as London, Birmingham and Liverpool. The Wilson government tried to regulate emigration into Great Britain, but without much success. Although there was a need for service jobs in London, the huge influx of people from other countries created some social instability. This had a domino effect on the Consulate's visa department.

One of the Commonwealth countries which caused a lot of uproar during my tour in London was Rhodesia. Their announcement of a unilateral Declaration of Independence triggered a snowballing effect in the rest of the African countries. The former European colonies all desired democracy and independence.

Although I had to work on Thanksgiving Day, 1965, we were invited to the home of our friends, Joe and Lois Forry, at Carlton Mansion. They had included two American students from California and Arkansas. It gave us a sense of family togetherness. I always felt that Foreign Service families were our "extended family" overseas.

On December 7, 1965, Ambassador and Mrs. David Bruce gave a Christmas reception for 600 people at their residence. It was a formal event for all American Embassy employees

## Library of Congress

and their wives. After shaking hands with Ambassador and Mrs. Bruce, our names were called as we entered the ballroom. Another party, on New Year's Eve, was hosted by our new Communications Supervisor, Louis Correr, who had replaced Eric Baxter.

President Johnson's State of the Union message, in January, 1966, warned Americans that intensification of the Vietnam war effort would result in higher inflation, but that South Vietnam had to be saved from Communism. The President's other priority was his "war on poverty" program. He stated, "In a land of progress and plenty there should be no one ill fed, ill housed, illiterate."

January 30, 1966, a by-election in the city of Hull resulted in a big victory for Labor and an opportunity for Prime Minister Harold Wilson to call a general election earlier, if he wanted, to secure a larger majority in the House of Commons. Wilson needed this victory because England continued to be plagued with labor strikes in public transport, including the National Railroad.

On the continent, the six Common Market countries worked on a common solution to tariff issues related to European and transatlantic trade. Each member country made some adjustment. For instance, Belgium made some changes in its national medical plan, and also worried about its high rate of inflation. One strong point in Belgium's favor was that Brussels was now the center of the EEC. It attracted huge investments from US companies, such as Ford Motors. This period was the "Golden '60s" in Belgium. The country was a good outlet for American products, but because of the country's limited natural resources, and Zaire's (formerly known as the Belgian Congo) independence, it struggled to stay afloat in world markets. Belgian investments, formerly in Zaire, were reverted elsewhere.

One day I received a call from Dewey Clark, a friend from Pittsburgh, who gave me details of his work with an American insurance company in Brussels.

## Library of Congress

On March 26, 1966, I had become the proud father of a lovely girl: Rebecca Marie. It was a Saturday morning and it snowed heavily in London. Ma## experienced pre-labor pains the night before. Mrs. Sacker, our landlady, offered to drive us to St. Andrew's Hospital. The doctors asked me to join them for the delivery. At 11:15 in the morning, the happiest moment in my life, Rebecca, our daughter, was born, a beautiful, dark haired infant, weighing six pounds.

On April 17, 1966, Rebecca was baptized at the French Church of Notre Dame, near Leicester Square. Besides Ma##'s parents, our friends, Joe and Lois Forry, attended the ceremony.

Following Rebecca's birth we received assistance from English welfare clinics. On occasions, a public health nurse came to our home to check on both mother and child. The birth of my daughter filled our home with joy. After a long day at the Embassy I took care of our baby and played an active role as father on weekends.

Counselor for Administration, Findley Burns, was appointed as Ambassador to Jordan. By now Mrs. Burns and Ma## knew each other well. She sent a little gift for Rebecca. They always took a personal interest in the families of their staff.

In early May, 1966, I received a letter from the Director of Staff Corps Personnel that I had been selected for a consular assignment. This dramatically changed my foreign service career in that I would be now be integrated in the foreign service officer corps and assume greater responsibilities. During my last months in London, I also tutored an English lawyer in French. From him I learned the difference between a solicitor and barrister. A solicitor, he said, is a person who prepares legal dossiers, but is never able to speak in court. A barrister appears in court and gets involved in debate.

Joaquin Balaguer's election as President of the Dominican Republic restored political stability and some democratic institutions in that Caribbean nation.

## Library of Congress

In May, 1966, there was another chain of events in NATO. NATO's military organization headquarters moved from Paris to Wavre, near Brussels. This move enhanced Brussels' position as the center of the EEC (presently the EC) and NATO.

On July 23, 1966, I returned to St. Paul's Cathedral to visit the American chapel, which had been dedicated in 1958 by Queen Elizabeth II and Vice President Richard Nixon to British and American soldiers of World War II. In this church I also saw the tombs of Wellington and Admiral Collingwood.

In early August I was on vacation with Ma##t##'s family in Le Verdon, France. There I received a telegram from the Embassy in London. It read: "Although your present assignment was made by Panel B (mid career officer panel), I am happy to be able to tell you that you have been assigned to Alexandria, United Arab Republic, as Vice Consul."

When I returned to London I also found a note on my desk from Minister Philip M. Kaiser: "Congratulations on your recent promotion. I know it is a well deserved recognition of your work for, and loyalty to, the Foreign Service."

I sent the customary letters to the Consul General and administrative officer in Alexandria.

### CHAPTER VIII Egypt

At the end of September, 1966, we left England and took Rebecca on her first visit to see her paternal grandparents in Pittsburgh. Home leave was seven weeks long, and was devoted to family.

Our trip from Pittsburgh to Alexandria, Egypt, with our nine month old baby was one of the longest we took in the foreign service. We always put Rebecca in a traveling cot, which made her fall asleep more quickly. During the early evening, as our plane was slowly descending to the Athens airport, we saw mountains and little Greek villages. A TWA representative met us at the airport and told us that we were checked into a hotel for the

## Library of Congress

night. During the forty minute ride to the Alpha Hotel we saw beaches, beach houses, white villas, shopping areas, the Acropolis, the Temple of Zeus, and Constitution Square. It was already dark when we settled into the hotel, and it took us several hours to put Rebecca to sleep. After a few hours of rest, I took a walk in the city.

Athens is very friendly and cosmopolitan. On every street corner there are fruit shops, with an abundance of fresh Mediterranean vegetables and Greek wines. A grocer told me that there are two types of wine in Greece: one with pure grapes, another mixed with raisins. Everything was new and colorful, and I felt the richness of Mediterranean culture.

In the evening we left for Cairo. It was a smooth flight, and was the last leg of our long journey. At the airport we were met by Dick Weitzel and a local employee of our embassy, who helped us with passport and customs papers. Dick worked with me in Panama and was now the budget officer in Cairo. It was good to be with friends in a strange land. Everything looked different — indeed, culture shock seemed to be an understatement. People dressed in long robes and turbans, and spoke in Arabic. In the main hall of the airport we heard the noise of fast cars, large crowds of people, many with small children rushing to get on buses. Luckily, Dick escorted us through the turmoil of people and erratic traffic, and an embassy car took us quickly to the Nile Hilton Hotel, from which we could see the lights of downtown Cairo. It was quite a romantic sight.

Dick invited us to his home in the Cairo suburbs for a late dinner. His wife, Anne, and their two sons, were waiting for us. It was good to unwind in a family atmosphere after the long trip.

The next morning we woke at 6:30 to prepare for the train trip to Alexandria. With the help of an Embassy driver and two Egyptian porters we finally settled into an air conditioned compartment. From our train seats we saw large, unusual crowds — women veiled in black, men in robes. It took awhile before the train left Ramses Railroad Station, and this gave us a chance to see preparations for President Nasser's departure for Port

## Library of Congress

Said, where there was also an American Consulate. A huge red carpet was laid out where Nasser would be greeting some officials. As our train pulled out of the station, we saw people on both sides lined up in rows waiting for a glimpse of their President and charismatic leader.

We passed little farming villages and saw camels, donkeys and families walking near the Nile. The beautiful sun seemed to erase the reality of the poverty of the masses. A tourist on the train said that the Egyptians were in the period of Ramadan, a Muslim period of fasting that lasts about one month. During Ramadan, Muslims are forbidden to eat, drink, smoke, or have any other pleasures between sunrise and sunset. They eat only one meal each day, after five in the evening.

In Alexandria we were met by Lewis Afram, the Consulate General's administrative assistant, who welcomed us to Egypt and took us to the Cecil Hotel. As we arrived there was a lunch invitation waiting from Vice Consul and Mrs. Hugh MacMillan. I had to go alone because Ma## and Rebecca needed time to settle in.

The lunch with Hugh and his wife prepared me for an afternoon meeting with Principal Officer David Fritzlan. Hugh gave me some hints on what to expect from the meeting at the Consulate. Consul General David Fritzlan was a veteran diplomat, with wide experience in Middle East affairs. He impressed me as being a formal foreign service officer who would demand discipline and protocol responsibilities from his US staff. This proved to be the case. I felt somewhat at ease with him because, like me, he was an avid pipe smoker.

I quickly settled into my office and began supervising consular functions. George Ford II, another foreign service officer, handled economic matters and Jack Bowie's job was political affairs. He was also deputy to Mr. Fritzlan. I came on board to join a competent US and Egyptian staff.

## Library of Congress

One of the first order's of business was preparing to move to a well furnished apartment on 18 Rue Djabarti, two blocks from the office. It was located in a high, middle class building and was spacious enough to entertain out of town guests. Most of our officers lived near the Consulate. I learned quickly that security was important, and with a small baby we felt secure living next to the Consulate. This would also prove to be true later on, when our Consulate came under attack.

On Christmas Day, 1966, we were invited for dinner by Consul and Mrs. Jack Bowie. Jacqueline was also a former French national and this made it easy for Ma##t# to learn about a wife's diplomatic role at post. It did not feel like Christmas on this balmy Mediterranean day, but we felt less lonely. After I had talked at length with Jack, my earlier impression was confirmed that Alexandria would be a busy post. I learned a lot from both Consul General Fritzlan and Jack Bowie, as far as foreign service career development was concerned. They both had experience working in the Near East.

We had to buy food locally and it was quite a challenge to go to downtown butchers and grocers. There was a great variety of fresh vegetables and fruit. All meats were fresh, and we were able to do fish and meat shopping for an entire week. Since the downtown traffic was quite confusing, we took a cab to do our purchases. We were fortunate that Rebecca liked the local goat milk, which was delivered to the house daily. We also had a small commissary at Embassy Cairo from where we could order coffee and clothing items not readily available on the local market.

The Consulate General was located in an ornately furnished villa that once belonged to the Basili family. They were friends of the late Egyptian King Farouk I (1936-1952). King Farouk spent some summers in this villa. In the rear of the building is a lovely garden. My office was on the ground floor and easily accessible to the general public for visas, citizenship, and consular services. It had a lovely old chimney, bookcase and wood-paneled walls. Behind my desk were the American and Consular flags, which were a



## Library of Congress

constant reminder of the country and career I loved. The building was patrolled by local guards on a 24 hour basis. It was the nicest office I ever had in the service.

One day we visited the palace and gardens of King Farouk, at Montazah, near the Palestine Hotel on the border of the Mediterranean Sea. The floors were Italian mosaic and the staircases were made of Italian Carrara marble. Afterward, we drove to the beach at Mamoura, where we saw a modern apartment complex.

I became deeply involved in consular work in Alexandria and liked every aspect of it. Visas were issued during the day and at night I often received calls from American tourists in distress. My administrative duties included the maintenance and security aspects of the post. In this area of work I coordinated my projects with the administrative/security officer at our embassy in Cairo. I had to be patient because any administrative projects had to be approved by the Embassy.

One of my cherished projects was to improve the aesthetic features of the Consulate indoors. It was at that time that the curator at the State Department started an Art in Embassies program to reflect some "Americana" in overseas posts. I started to gather historic and art pictures to add to the good taste of this neoclassical mansion.

The long term goal of the Embassy was to acquire the Consulate Chancery as US government property. This entailed preparing justification documents for Washington. Before acquisition of this property could be made we would have to go through many bureaucratic hurdles.

On January 12, 1967, I visited the official residence of the Consul General in Alexandria. The property had been acquired by the US government for the use of the Consul General, and its principal residence had a large living room used to entertain guests. The furniture in the house had been purchased in Greece. I also became acquainted with Pathy House in Alexandria (the summer residence of our Ambassador in Cairo). It had been used as an R & R home (Rest and Recuperation) for American personnel at the US Consulate in

## Library of Congress

Port Said and Embassy personnel in Cairo. This house was donated by the Pathy family (a Hungarian family) to our government. In the exotic gardens are a tennis court and pool. Since the Mediterranean climate in Alexandria was an attraction, there were many foreign service families from the Cairo embassy coming our way.

For centuries, many European colonists settled in Egypt attracted by the mild Mediterranean climate. The French and English had been particularly visible in Alexandria. Because of their investments in the Suez Canal, they had many commercial interests. Although French and English were widely spoken in Alexandria, I was required to take Arabic language classes three times a week. Professor Abbas had been teaching Consulate personnel for over twenty years. He was a very patient teacher and had devised his own teaching method, which was based on conversational Arabic. He came to my office for the private classes. It was a great intellectual challenge.

There is one place in Alexandria where one could feel Europe's influence — St. Catherine's Catholic Cathedral, located in St. Catherine's Square in downtown Alexandria. Behind the main altar is the tomb of Emmanuel III, King of Italy. Although St. Catherine was killed in Alexandria, her body is buried near Mount Sinai. The Baptistry of the Cathedral has two lovely murals depicting the birth of a baby boy and girl. A priest of the St. Francis Order said that church services were attended by Italian, French, and Spanish communities. Walking in downtown Alexandria, one could taste the international flavor of the city.

Alexandria had a large Consular representation: the United States, French, English, German Libyan and Russian consulates, as well as Czechoslovakia. There were close trade ties between Egypt and Eastern European countries. Their trade was often on a barter agreement. The UAR would sell cotton to Eastern Europe in return for Eastern European commodities.

## Library of Congress

Our US cotton industry was highly protective, and the US government was not inclined to encourage the buying of Egyptian cotton. Egypt had many economic and social problems, due in great part to its rapidly growing population. The Egyptian government had set a goal to attain total employment. They tried to attain this by employing many Egyptians in the military and police forces.

Our own Agency for International Development (AID) officials told us at staff meetings that CARE and Catholic Relief Agencies of the United States were often sending free wheat to Egyptian hospitals and schools. The Egyptian government in 1967 wanted more wheat from us than we were able to give. The food problem was not the only precarious one. Egypt and Syria badly needed dollars to purchase American-made machinery. The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) had been more successful than the United States in making inroads in the Egyptian economic development. One of their major projects in the 1950s was the building of the Aswan Dam. This project enhanced Russia's political image in Egypt. President Gamal Abdel Nasser, elected President in 1958, was respected by the masses. He was often seen (or depicted) as a selfless servant of the people. He improved the lot of the common man to the detriment of European business investments. Nasser finally made an assertive political move in 1956 and nationalized the Suez Canal. This almost caused a major conflict in the Middle East. However, the Eisenhower administration intervened to avert a major Cold War crisis. At about this time Mr. Donald C. Burgess, director of the Egyptian Desk at the State Department, arrived at the Consulate. His visit coincided with the appointment of Ambassador Lucius D. Battle as Assistant Secretary for Near Eastern Affairs. Mr. Burgess came to brief us on the state of relations between the United States and the United Arab Republic, and the political union at that time between Syria and Egypt. These meetings were confidential and gave us Washington's view on overall relations with our host country.

On January 18, I went on my first business trip to the embassy in Cairo. It gave me an opportunity to discuss administrative and consular issues with my embassy colleagues.

## Library of Congress

Since our social schedule was unusually heavy, Ma#t# got some help from a wonderful Egyptian maid, Miriam. She was very helpful with the general household chores and was good with our daughter. The Egyptians are very devoted to the family and show their affection for children in public. When we took Rebecca to nearby parks they would often stop us to look at her. From Miriam we learned many aspects of Moslem culture and religion. She used to pray at noon and we were impressed by her sincerity in prayer.

As soon as we were settled into our apartment we invited the American and Egyptian staffs and their family for drinks. Some of our guests were Mr. and Mrs. Anis, Lily Tanagho, Lewis Afram and his wife, Anna and Tacky Papadimitriou, Dolores Knauer and her fianc# Alex, and Charlotte Lackey. I worked with these wonderful people every day and it was good to have them over to our house. Egyptian families are very hospitable and often reciprocate socially.

We were also close with members of other consulates in Alexandria. At the home of FSO George Ford III we met Mr. and Mrs. Pierce, Vice Consul of Great Britain, and Mr. and Mrs. Arid (an Egyptian attorney). We became especially close friends with British Consul General and Mrs. Frederick Waters, and to this day Mrs. Waters and I exchange Christmas messages.

January 28, we went to the residence of Consul General and Mrs. Fritzlan to attend a dinner for Italian Consul General Castellani. He arrived in Alexandria about the same time we did.

Besides St. Catherine's Cathedral, the Roman-Greek museum was my favorite visiting place. It has many historic remnants of Roman domination of Alexandria. Next to it is a mansion with an atelier used by a group of artists and writers. French films and lectures are also presented there. At one time, when European families lived in the mansion, there were many cultural get togethers.

## Library of Congress

The city of the late 1960s was much different from the old days. There were a good number of cinemas in the downtown area, and some showed American made films.

February 9, I attended a reception of the Consulate of the Kingdom of Libya, on the occasion of the fifteenth anniversary of their independence. It was a highly formal affair, set up in a special tent with buffet tables prepared with an opulence of food and fruit. Our friends, Vice Consul of West Germany and Mrs. Krohn, and Vice Consul of Switzerland, Mr. Meyers, were also there.

That same week I met the French Consul, Mr. Roux, at a party at the British official residence. Public Affairs Officer and Mrs. Otwell invited us to their home to meet a visiting professor from American University, in Washington, DC

Besides the social events, my visa workload was heavy. I spent many hours with visa interviews, passport applications, and courtesy visits from local businessmen, such as the director general of American Export Lines.

I also began to teach English at the US Information Center/Thomas Jefferson Library. There were about 750 Egyptian students registered there for English classes. I took care of two classes in the evening. It proved to be a worthy challenge. One of the benefits of teaching was the exchange of ideas with students following the classes. I was impressed by the zeal with which my Egyptian students pursued the course and wanted to master English and learn about American culture. Mrs. Ibrahim, an American married to an Egyptian national, was the Director of the English teaching program.

In early March, President Johnson appointed Richard H. Nolte to be our new envoy to the United Arab Republic (UAR), filling the post vacated by Ambassador Lucius Battle. His fluency in Arabic and background in the Middle East were key assets.

Consular Officer on Front Line

## Library of Congress

In March I received a weekend assignment to meet the Queen Elizabeth, which was to arrive near the port of Alexandria. Mrs. Stuart Louckheim, director of the Academy of Music in Philadelphia, would be on board. Following debarkation it was planned that the Louckheim party would proceed by train to Luxor. The giant passenger ship was too big to dock in the port so we had to board a small motor boat and go to sea to meet them. Our launch had 15 people on board. It was a very windy Saturday morning and we had difficulty getting near the liner. The closer we came to the ship, the more fierce the wind. When we finally arrived in front of the ship after 45 minutes of heavy turbulence, it became obvious to the boat's captain that we would have to return. We almost didn't make it back to port. When the Queen Elizabeth left for Lebanon that afternoon, it was a disappointment for many in Alexandria. It had been arranged to have the ship here for four days, with big parties on board.

Since there were many Americans in town, I helped a couple who were in a serious car accident at Marsa Matruh. I took care of police and insurance red tape. The day of the Queen Elizabeth ship debacle I had lunch with American tourists at the Philip Hotel. It was all part of a consul's life on a typical weekend in the foreign service.

On March 14, I spent another two days of consultations in Cairo with Administrative officer Chuck Skoda. Chuck and his wife were my hosts at their house in Maadi on the outskirts of Cairo. In the evening Chuck took me to the famous Sphinx and the pyramids. It was a breathtaking sight to see the pyramids lit up in the desert. He and I had close professional ties and were able to make some breakthroughs in administrative/security matters.

This time around I was able to spend a couple of hours in the archeological museum in Cairo. It is one of the world's best on Egyptian kings. Students come here to study the entire processing of Egyptian embalming.

March 21 was the beginning of the religious holiday in the Moslem world. It began the morning of the 21st, following the full moon, and ended on Friday. The Moslems celebrate

## Library of Congress

the killing of a lamb. This is a reference to Ibrahim who was ordered by God to kill his son, but at the moment he took his knife to obey, God told him to kill the ram instead. This religious event happened near Mecca in Saudi Arabia, which is one of the holiest places in the Moslem world. Many Moslems travel to the mountains for Bairam to spend the night and to participate in the feast.

Consequently, I became interested in learning about the Islamic religion. I was told that the Koran has many references to Christ and Mary, and to Jesus' miracles. My Arabic teacher said that Islamic religion cements the Christian faith and is a continuation of the Christian religion in this part of the world.

During the week of Bairam we had a sand storm, which is usually a prelude to warmer weather. These climate changes reach their culmination on May 2, which is Shem El Nessim, the beginning of summer, labor day, and the flower show. Most people don't work that day. I went to the Antoniadis Gardens, where Mrs. Mann, an American of the Garden Club of New Jersey, had organized her own flower show. Our Consulate often lent a helping hand to visiting US groups, such as the day when a student brass band from the state of Georgia appeared. We later met them at a reception.

It was pleasant to drive on some of the small desert roads around Alexandria, replete with fields of flowers and vegetables. One such ride is to Agami Beach (40 km. from Alexandria and the Aboukir Seaport). The water there has a lovely blue and green color. The mild weather permitted us to relax on the beaches where there was always a soothing breeze.

During our first months in Alexandria we became friends with Norma Margossian's family and Dr. and Mrs. Gamez Hafez, who worked for the UAR Ministry of Works. On April 11 an Arabic New Year occasion, Dr. Hafez took us through two mosques: the Abo El Eablas and El Booseery. Before we entered the temples we had to remove our shoes. I was struck by the immense respect and devotion which reigned in these sites of worship.

## Library of Congress

In April, 1967, a military coup in Greece removed the Greek monarchs. These political events in Greece became of concern to us and in the Near East generally. Athens had been a reliable NATO partner and a convenient stopover for flights into Egypt. After a few unstable weeks the military Junta brought back some normalcy. Flights which had been suspended to and from Athens were back in operation.

Although I was performing all the duties of Vice Consul, my two commissions—one as Consular officer, signed by President Johnson and Secretary of State Rusk; and the other, as Vice Consul to Alexandria, UAR, arrived late. On May 16, 1967, I took the oath of office as Consular Officer. Consul General David Fritzlan officially presented both documents to me.

I experienced an increased visa issuance workload during May because of the World Fair in Montreal. Many Egyptians who visited the fair took advantage of stopping over in the United States.

I had one consular case involving an Egyptian, age 70 (a former seaman), who was receiving social security benefits. His benefits had been suspended because he had been deported from the United States for family reasons and was declared ineligible thereafter. He came to my office to explain his hardship case in detail. I decided that I would submit proof to the Social Security office in Baltimore that he had resided ten years in the United States and was, therefore, eligible to receive his benefits outside of the United States. It took some time to prepare his case and to submit documentary proof of this. He only lacked one month residence in the United States to qualify. I felt I would give it my best efforts and recommended reinstatement of his social security. We were able to convince Baltimore of his bona fide eligibility for benefits prior to the deportation procedure. A cable reply stated that his benefits would be reinstated as long as he would be readmitted to the United States and reside there for one calendar month. This type of consular service is time consuming, but can affect public relations with the host country in a positive way.



## Library of Congress

Our friends, Dick and Anne Weitzel and their two sons, Bobby and David, came to Alexandria and stayed at the government guest house in Alexandria. We invited them over for drinks and dinner at the Union Restaurant in downtown Alexandria. We also had a routine visit from Mr. Snow, Regional Language Director. It was his job to visit Consular posts in the area and to evaluate the progress being made in our Arabic classes.

In mid May unrest stirred the UAR. Israel and Syria had some military skirmishes from time to time, but the May 1967 military clashes were more aggressive. Radio and TV news commentaries spoke of a general alert and readiness of the UAR armed forces. We also learned that the US Sixth Fleet had been refused stops at UAR ports. President Nasser ordered some troops sent near the border of Syria.

It was not until May 22 that the UAR began to mobilize its military reserves, which was a step closer to conflict. Even on May 22, as we spent a few hours driving through the Public Gardens, we saw a convoy of trucks and military jeeps. I learned that youth groups were being organized to assist the civilian defense groups. We never sensed any hostility from the local population toward us, but the Egyptian press was very vocal in its anti-imperial campaigns, mainly directed against the United States and its European allies. The crisis further intensified when the UAR requested official withdrawal from the United Nation's Emergency Force. This was a political move that allowed the UAR to control military positions previously held by the U.N. The situation worsened by the hour. At the Consulate General we were told to transact business in a normal way. We felt, however, that our presence in Alexandria was now that of a hardship post. I continued to issue visas to Egyptian and third country nationals. For example, I issued a visa to an Egyptian doctor who had studied at the Public Health Department of the University of Pittsburgh. I also had to attend to a tragic car accident case involving Dr. Samir Naguib, an Egyptian medical doctor who was an assistant professor at Wayne State University, in Detroit. The 33 year old doctor's car was struck by a hit and run driver, and he and his fianc#e, who was secretary to the Lebanese Consul in Detroit, were killed. Dr. Naquib's father was in

## Library of Congress

despair in my office. I was able to offer some comfort and facilitative consular services. I talked to Dr. Vorware of Wayne State, and he agreed to have the doctor's remains shipped back to Alexandria. This was an exceptional case, where I felt our consulate's assistance to Dr. Naquib's family in Alexandria was in the interest of US-Egyptian relations.

Because of the tense political situation in the UAR it became increasingly more difficult for Egyptian nationals to obtain immigrant visas. In Alexandria we only issued tourist visas but offered guidance for those Egyptians who wanted to emigrate. Issuance of immigration visas took place at the Embassy. A priest of the local Syrian Catholic church also came to inquire about the status of our US immigration policies.

In late May, as tensions in the UAR intensified, we received Vice Consul and Mrs. Harold Otwell. He was the director of the United States Information Service (USIS) and the Jefferson Library. I remembered from my days in Panama, and the evacuation there, that we derived comfort and strength from bonding with American families.

The Consulate General had become the focal point of information for US citizens, many of whom were employees and dependents of Phillips Petroleum. They came to know what would happen in case of a widening conflict. I spent most of my time keeping up on the whereabouts and welfare of US citizens. I asked my very able consular assistant, Anna Papadimitriou, to update our US citizens emergency list in case we needed to contact them in an emergency or evacuation.

Most Americans living abroad registered at US Consulates. Some didn't. It was a monumental task to obtain data. Sometimes, tourist agencies, hotels, and the local police would offer help. Although the State Department had already issued a travel advisory notice warning Americans not to travel in the Middle East many American tourists passed through Cairo and Alexandria on Greek excursions. We had not yet been on official alert but we took every precautionary measure to protect American citizens. Many tourists were

## Library of Congress

US professors and students who ignored government travel advisories. They took risks, and some were later stranded at hotels.

May 23, I received Mr. Corney in my office. He was the Administrative Officer of the World Health Organization (WHO), which is part of the U.N. From him I learned firsthand that U.N. Secretary General U Thant would arrive in Cairo in the afternoon for crisis talks with Egyptian leaders and US diplomats. We kept hoping that the U.N. would be able to diffuse this tense situation between Israel and Egypt.

### Evacuation of Dependents

Ambassador Nolte's first official act, May 26, was to order all dependents of US government employees in the UAR to leave for Athens. It was to be a temporary evacuation given the state of affairs in the Middle East. Ma#t# began packing immediately for herself and Rebecca. They left with the other dependents by train for Cairo the next day. It was a painful separation. We later learned that most Foreign service posts in the Middle East fell under this evacuation rule, and that an evacuation center was set up at the American Embassy in Athens. As employees we were told to continue essential Foreign Service jobs. It was a relief for us to learn that our families had arrived safely in Athens the following day. As hours and days went by it became apparent that Egypt and other Arab countries were solidly behind President Nasser's stance against Israel. These countries had formed a tight block against Zionism. From my Egyptian friends and students I learned that Egypt resented the United States' pro-Israel stance and the lack of an Arab viewpoint in the US Congress. By June 1, we felt that, short of a U.N. mediation role, Egypt and Israel would go to war. I continued teaching English in the evenings, and contact with my Egyptian students until the last minute. One of my students, Ibrahim, who worked for an insurance firm in Alexandria, came to look me up at the Consulate to find out how I was doing. Never, during this crisis, did I feel any overt antagonism on the part of the Egyptian people against our Consulate staff or toward me personally. The channels of friendship were kept open and the warmhearted feelings of the Egyptians toward us made us feel

## Library of Congress

good during the days and nights of the June 1967 crisis. On June 5, around 9 a.m., I first heard on the radio that military hostilities had broken out between Egypt and Israel. Later it would be known as the "Six Days War," during which Israel captured the West Bank and East Jerusalem from Jordan, and the Golan Heights from Syria. That started the diplomatic exodus of US Foreign Service personnel from the Middle East. It was a very busy day in the office. Security guards of the Consulate compound had been expanded. Egyptian authorities had also posted security at our private residences. In the morning I talked with many American citizens who had come to see us. I tried to calm their fears. It became obvious to me that our Consulate in Alexandria had become a trouble spot in the world. That afternoon I went to the local Egyptian police office on a routine Consular matter. Officials there could not have been more courteous. There were constant air raids; the lights of our cars were painted in blue. At home I had to dim the lights at night. It reminded me of my childhood during the German occupation of Belgium during World War II. People in the streets, for the first time, showed signs of nervousness. They were rushing back and forth to local markets to buy supplies. As I left the Consulate late in the afternoon I saw ugly, painted signs on the facade of the consulate gate walls: "Israel Dead" and "UAR Victory." On the evening news I learned that the war between Egypt and Israel had officially started. Although the UAR had suspended diplomatic relations with the United States, consular relations would be maintained. This was a similar scenario as in Panama. The Embassy of Spain in Cairo had accepted the role of protecting power, taking care of American interests. In a few days, other Arab nations would follow suit and sever diplomatic relations with us. That night I slept very little as the air raids and passing police cars kept me awake.

### CHAPTER IX Athens, 1967

On board the SS Carina, a ship traveling from Alexandria to Greece, were 580 American evacuees from Egypt, including US Ambassador Richard Nolte. It was a tiring four day journey, the ship was overloaded and one could only breathe fresh air on deck. In one of

## Library of Congress

his talks with us the Ambassador advised us to take some rest in Athens and to enjoy the sites in Greece.

My future, and that of many in the Foreign Service, was uncertain. In Athens, I stayed at the Hotel Electra, within walking distance to the US Embassy. As Consular Officer I was assigned to the evacuation center. I thought about what would happen next. Officially, US Consular relations with the UAR had not been suspended, but there were rumors that the State Department might want to send some Consular officers back to Egypt to maintain essential consular services. My main job at the Embassy in Athens was to revalidate US passports for Americans returning to the Near East.

Some of the employees of the Phillips Petroleum Company of Oklahoma had flown back to Egypt. At the Embassy we received a cable telling us that the day after we had left Alexandria another mob had returned to our Consulate General and burned it nearly to the ground (85% destroyed). Although the US had taken a neutral stance in this conflict, the Egyptian press and radio released anti-American statements and stated that we had supported Israel. The Voice of America and BBC tried to dispel these inaccuracies.

Although the Six Days War ended in a cease fire, the diplomatic war continued in the Middle East and would continue for years. Since that time, there have been other attacks on embassies and foreign service personnel.

On June 21, 1967, the American staff in Egypt, having evacuated to Greece, came together for drinks at the Grand Chalet Hotel to say goodbye to Consul General David Fritzlan. He said that we all came out of this crisis with flying colors and that he was proud of us! The State Department later bestowed a Superior Honor award to him and the entire staff of the Consulate General.

Chances of returning to Alexandria were becoming slimmer every day in view of political developments in the UAR and that country's alignment with the USSR against Israel. Some of the USIS Cultural and Public Affairs personnel, such as librarians, were

## Library of Congress

reassigned to Washington. It became obvious to me that, with the burning of the Jefferson Library in Alexandria, and others in the area, our cultural and educational projects would be seriously curtailed.

Forty percent of foreign service personnel were still stranded in Athens without onward assignment. I was one of them. David Ness had been appointed as Charg# d'Affaires of our US interests section in the UAR. My friend, Dick Weitzel, was one of four American officers left behind in Cairo to supervise pending administrative matters, including shipments of household effects. The Otwells had been reassigned to Washington, and Chuck Skoda and his wife were sent to Dacca, Pakistan. Consul Jack Bowie, with whom I shared a cabin on the SS Carina, was reassigned to the Munitions Section of the Department. The Egyptian Foreign Office in Cairo had requested, through the Spanish Embassy, permission to send ten administrative personnel to the Embassy to take care of urgent business, such as caretaking of buildings and shipment of personal effects of evacuees. A departmental decision on the future of our consulates in Alexandria and Port Said had been deferred. Although I harbored some desire to return to Egypt, this appeared unlikely, so I sent a cable to Washington to be considered for a vacant consular position in Athens.

Some mail from Egypt reached me via diplomatic pouch. The Arab people were profoundly wounded because of the outcome of the Six Days War. The UAR Armies suffered severe losses. Their national pride hurt. The late June summit meeting between President Johnson and the Premier of the Soviet Union, Alexsei Kosygin, at Glassboro, New Jersey, was a step in the right direction. The US and the Soviet Union were the two powers directly responsible for maintaining peace in the Near East. Much needed to be done to alleviate the misery of Arab refugees and Palestinians. My diplomatic colleagues and I felt that the Palestinian problem had been neglected for years. We hoped that both the Israeli and Arab governments would solve these issues at the peace table and that a halt to the arms race in the Middle East would diminish tensions. However, it would take another quarter of a century, and another conflict in 1973, before serious talks were possible to

## Library of Congress

solve the Palestinian problem. Much violence and the deaths of thousands of innocent people would be the price to pay for eventual cooperation between Jews and Arabs. I felt a special tie with the Egyptian people, and those of the Middle East.

Within a week or so, some Americans were returning to the Middle East. In early July, I spoke with my friend, Bob Adams, of Phillips Petroleum, in Alexandria. He gave me an update on the situation there. He described it as relatively calm and said that some of his employees were going back, even though some of their dependents chose to remain in Athens. Since the Department's travel ban to Lebanon had been lifted, many Americans were returning there. Bob felt less sanguine about American officials returning to Alexandria. He described our Consulate General as a total loss. A few of our local Foreign Service nationals were now working in an office of the Spanish Consulate General. My Administrative Assistant in Alexandria, Lewis Afram, had put our household goods in storage for eventual forwarding to the next post.

The Greek political system was fluid. The recent military coup d'état had put the future of the Greek monarchy in doubt. The personal popularity of the Greek royal family remained intact. But average Greek citizens were going about their business and it was not noticeable on their faces that their government had undergone a radical change. It was at this time that former Vice President Richard Nixon had lunch with King Constantine (now in exile in Great Britain) and Queen Mother Frederika of Greece.

There was time to visit Greek artifacts at the National Benaki Museum, and to explore the Agora and the Parthenon. Some of our friends went to the Greek Isles. Martha and Rebecca had now returned from France to Athens, and life became somewhat normal again.

June 29, 1967 was a special, beautiful day in Athens. I was in the crowd in front of the Cathedral, waiting for the arrival of the royal family. The royal christening of Crown Prince Paul was to take place inside the orthodox church. In the file of official cars I saw Greek



## Library of Congress

Prime Minister and Mrs. Kollias. They were followed in an open car by King Constantine and Queen Sophia. Between them sat their first born daughter, Princess Alexia. The watching crowd cheered "Constantinus!." More royal horses followed, and the car of Princess Irene. Then came the limousine of Queen Mother Frederika, holding Crown Prince Paul. They were greeted by government and Orthodox church dignitaries. Many Greeks had objected to the overthrow of their government in April, but the people who witnessed the royal ceremony did not show disapproval of the Kollias government that day. (Many vocal leaders opposing this military coup — as well as actress Melina Mercouri — went into exile.)

Besides taking care of evacuation problems caused by the Six Day War, I also had duties in the passport section of the American Embassy in Athens, working on "loss of American citizenship" cases. In May of 1967, the US Supreme Court, in its historic *Afroyim vs. Rusk* decision, had ruled that all American citizens who had voted in a foreign election, and had thereby lost their American citizenship under section 349 of the Immigration and Naturalization law, could regain their US citizenship if they wanted to because the Supreme Court held it to be unconstitutional for an American citizen to lose citizenship solely on the basis of voting in a foreign election. It was my duty to notify expatriated Americans living in Greece, who had previously voted abroad, that they could regain their US nationality if they applied at our Embassy. Many Americans came to the Embassy to be interviewed during my tenure. It created a huge backlog of work.

Our Embassy in Athens was one of the busiest in Europe. In 1967 there were about 14,000 Greeks who drew social security checks in Greece because of previous employment in the US. There was a social security agent stationed at our embassy to deal with the implementation of a special treaty between Greece and the US covering social security benefits. One of the benefits of the treaty was that the ten years residence requirement in the US, for Greeks who had worked in the US before they could receive social security checks in their native Greece, did not apply to Greeks.



## Library of Congress

July 25, I received a cable from the State Department assigning me to the Consulate General in Hermosillo, Sonora. In hindsight it was destiny to be assigned to Mexico, for it was the beginning of a permanent friendship with Mexico and its people.

A few days later I received a confirmation letter from Barney Taylor, Consul General in Hermosillo, informing me that we would have an air conditioned, one story house to stay in, but that we would have to furnish it ourselves. It has been State Department policy to provide its employees with some housing allowance if no government quarters are available. For young aspiring candidates as American diplomats, it is worth noting that the US housing allowance abroad (because Foreign Service employees stationed in Washington are not entitled to a housing allowance) is, of course, equivalent to free rent.

In Athens I got to know Dick and Ilsa Higgins. Dick served as Vice Consul in Athens while I worked there. He took me under his umbrella and we were also invited to their home for dinner. Following an evacuation, a dinner invitation at the home of a foreign service colleague provides a feeling of family security.

In early August we left Athens for Pittsburgh, where I took an eight day rest with my parents. I also began an intensive Spanish language course at the Foreign Service Institute (FSI). I had different teachers from Latin America and was exposed to native speakers of Colombia, Cuba, Peru and Spain. It was useful for me to be exposed to different Latin American accents. As my experience with Spanish grew, I was able to discover which country's Spanish came closest to the original Spanish in Spain.

The Spanish classes at FSI were most interesting. I had a Cuban teacher by the name of Solis, and some days, Mr. Vilches, a native of Peru. Solis had been a lawyer in Havana before Fidel Castro took over. He was one of 15 Spanish teachers. There were also South American linguists at the FSI who, besides teaching Spanish, knew the evolutionary and technical aspects of the language and had degrees in linguistics. They visited the classes daily and made up progress reports on students. In early October, I finished eight weeks

## Library of Congress

of Spanish language training, which is the minimum time needed to be able to speak in Spanish on the job. Some of my colleagues received twelve to sixteen weeks. Dr. and Mrs. Montgomery were assigned to Bogota, and Mr. and Mrs. Harry Iceland were sent to USIS in Caracas. One of my friends, Morris Rothenberg, was nominated to go to our Embassy in Mexico City. At the occasion of our graduation, Morris and his wife had us over for dinner.

I received this nice letter from Consul General David Fritzlan: "I was very happy to have you on the staff at Alexandria and I shall always remember vividly those last frightful days and the fine work performed by yourself and other staff members. I trust all goes well with you and your family and that you will enjoy Hermosillo."

A few days before leaving for Mexico I had lunch with Lois Roork, Senior Visa Officer in Hermosillo. She became a dear friend of mine. Lois had extensive Consular experience in Hong Kong, Copenhagen, La Paz and Havana, and she shared this with me.

On October 11 we flew to Tucson. As soon as we arrived at the airport I was impressed by the warm desert climate of the Southwest. The palm trees and flowering bougainvillea decorated the streets to the Desert Inn Motel, where we rested before we started the long ride to Hermosillo. There is beauty in the Arizona desert. We enjoyed being surrounded by so many cacti and other desert plants.

State Department employees who go to border posts are required to drive their cars to the post. Since our car had been burned in Egypt we bought another secondhand station wagon to drive to Hermosillo. On October 14 we drove the two and a half hours from Tucson to Nogales through breathtaking scenery of the Arizona canyons. We were met at the Nogales border by US Consul and friend, Virgil Prichard. Virgil had taken care of immigration and customs papers to permit the importation of our car into the Mexican Republic. Mexican officials were meticulous with that type of paperwork, but cooperative.

On this, my first experience with the US-Mexican border, I became aware of how many Americans travel to Mexico for business and pleasure. I was less conscious of the fact of

## Library of Congress

how many Mexicans cross into the US seeking economic opportunities. Nogales was still a small but important border town in the late 1960s.

It was good to see Virgil and Charlotte Prichard again. We had a nice visit and lunch in their home overlooking the Nogales hills. Rebecca was happy to play with their son, Lito, in the flowered garden.

Virgil had wide experience in Mexican border posts. He often spoke of his tour of duty at Piedras Negras. When we set out for Hermosillo through the Sonoran desert we did not realize it would take about seven hours to drive along a winding and hazardous country road. We made a brief stop in Magdalena where Father Eusebio Kino is buried. He was an Italian Jesuit missionary and an explorer in the American Southwest. Father Kino also worked with the Indians in Sonora. There were only one or two small gasoline stations, and we arrived in Hermosillo after 7 p.m., when it had already turned dark.

### CHAPTER X 1967-1969 Hermosillo, Mexico

My first impression of Hermosillo was of a well built provincial city, clean and full of bougainvillea flower gardens. We checked into the Bougainvillea Hotel, in the Pitic area, about a five minute drive to the Consulate General and, conveniently, near the Maxim supermarket. It was not easy with a one and a half year old baby, but we got a lot of moral support from the Barney Taylors — the Consul General and his wife, who came to our motel with a baby bed. Administrative Officer Harold Grisser and his family helped us in our settling in and informed us about living conditions in Sonora.

I became quickly acquainted with the American and Mexican staff. It was clear to me, from my first get to know chat with Consul General Taylor, that I would be working with a qualified veteran Foreign Service Officer who had served in demanding posts such as Vietnam and Haiti. Barney had built up a great reputation with Mexican officials in this capital of the state of Sonora. He was very popular and knew how to mix with Sonoran ranchers and their families. He was also liked by the American community. I was assigned

## Library of Congress

as US citizens and protection officer, which was a front line job in Sonora. He told me that I would be directly responsible to him since citizenship and protection had wide public relations overtones. Although the Consulate General had a big immigrant and nonimmigrant visa load, Barney told me that my main responsibility would be to look after American citizens' interests, as there were many American citizens spending part of the winter months in Sonora.

In 1967, Hermosillo was a city of 120,000, with a relatively high standard of living. Sonora is a rich state of cattle, farming, mining, and fishing. My consular duties began as soon as I arrived. As US protection cases were always at hand, I soon had to go to the port city of Guaymas, a two hour drive from Hermosillo, to visit some incarcerated Americans.

I was lucky to have a nice office on the third floor of the ISSTE building (Social Security), across the street from the municipal palace. Beatrice Garcia, my Mexican citizen assistant, helped me a great deal with citizenship matters, such as foreign service reports of birth and death abroad and issuance of US passports. Citizenship and protection jobs were interrelated. Both required a lot of personal contact, correspondence, daily cables to Washington, and investigative reporting of accidents and detention cases in which American citizens were involved. My other clerk, Anna, was also a valuable asset in our section.

Every Thursday morning we had a staff meeting in the Consul General's office at which time each American officer would comment on his or her area of responsibility. This sharing of activities gave each officer a chance to learn about political, consular, economic, administrative, and cultural things going on in our consular district. Consul General Taylor stressed the importance of my job as it involved contact with Mexican district attorneys and police officials. US protection work was the key assignment in Sonora in the 1960s. It was not unusual to have some weekly articles in the Hermosillo newspapers covering items on American tourists. It put our Consulate in the media spotlight, and is still the hot spot in Sonora today.

## Library of Congress

Guaymas, with its NASA tracking station for satellites, had a good number of American families. The Kino Bay area was a choice site for American fishing fans, but the post was not a popular one with junior officers. Many who had preceded me had asked for transfers. In 1974, when Foreign Service Officer John Patterson was kidnapped and his body was later found in the Sonora Hills, our post's image did not improve. I considered it a challenging position, however, and it was in Hermosillo that I grew as a Foreign Service Officer. We were fortunate to have close contacts with the American and Mexican staff. We participated in many social events in the state capital. I enjoyed working with economic officer George Durgan who had an in-depth feeling for Mexican economic affairs and the world economy. Consul Lois Rook and Vice Consul Carolyn Allen were my colleagues in the consular field. They were handling large immigration visa loads.

One of my first social calls was on Armando Cantu, director of the Mexican-American Cultural Association. He had wide experience in coordinating cultural and educational projects with USIS and the consulate.

The first week after my arrival I visited the American prisoners at the State Penitentiary in Hermosillo. At that time we had five Americans there accused of drug smuggling. As Citizenship Officer it was my job to see to it that they were treated well. The conditions in the Hermosillo jail were adequate. Since this was my first Mexican assignment I had no basis for comparison. In Mexican jails most prisoners prepare their own meals. They are allowed to receive food supplies in jail as long as it is paid for. Some Americans received dollars and medicines from their families and did reasonably well. But there was a serious morale problem as few Americans were fluent in Spanish and many of the Mexican prison officials were not proficient in English. The American prisoners relied primarily on the Consular officer's visits to help communicate. I spent a couple of hours on this first visit to talk to each one personally. The Director provided a special room for the Consular visit. I decided to see them twice a month, and more if they had special needs, such as medicines and messages for their family.

## Library of Congress

I was again in Guaymas on October 27, assisting three jailed Americans. This time I got better acquainted with the local officials. I met Mr. Gordillo of the Ministerio Publico Federal (District Attorney's office) and Mr. Villairne, Chief of Police of Guaymas. It became clear to me that personal contact would be a practical tool to resolve many of the American protection cases. At noon I was invited for lunch on board the oceanographic cruise ship The Vega of Stanford University. There I learned that my three incarcerated Americans were marine students from that ship. They had been caught in a taxicab that had packages of marijuana. Since there was no positive proof of their drug involvement I was able to obtain their release later in the day.

While I had my consular duties Ma## often attended social functions in town, such as teas at the casino for the benefit of poor families, or the Blanco Y Negro Charity Ball, given at the Governor's palace the first weekend in November. At such events she met the wives of the Governor of Sonora and other leading officials. Foreign service spouses often play an effective representational role in the career of a foreign service officer. The local newspaper of Hermosillo Imparcial, reported on social and diplomatic activities.

Rebecca adjusted well to the quiet life in Hermosillo, except for a few too many bouts of tonsillitis, which made us call Dr. Duarte, a pediatrician who often came to the home to alleviate her symptoms.

November 7, the local townspeople celebrated the sixtieth anniversary of the death of Jesus Garcia. He died a heroic death on November 7, 1907, by staying on a burning train in order to save lives. There is a well known ballad (corrido) of Jesus Garcia. Mexican ballads evoke the historic struggles of the past.

By mid November we finally settled into a little ranch house on 79 Boulevard Hidalgo y Castilla. It was the first time we were together again at home since May 27, 1967, when Ma## and Rebecca were first evacuated from Egypt. The home was a five minute walk from the office, and easily accessible to local markets and the Cathedral.

## Library of Congress

Although we moved into the house, most of our personal belongings from Egypt were still en route and arrived in Veracruz at the end of November. We learned how to make do without many items, such as TV, books, and appliances. On November 20 we were in Hermosillo to celebrate Mexican Revolution Day, which commemorates the Mexican uprising against the dictatorial regime of Porfirio Diaz. A parade in downtown Hermosillo was organized by the local school. The Governor of Sonora, Faustino Felix Serna, presided over the event. One float in the parade drew much attention as the "1968 Olympics Delegation" that would help manage the Mexican Olympics in Mexico City.

Apart from the job, we led a rather sedate, provincial life. We made friends with local neighbors and developed friendly contacts with the Granich and Camu families, well-known ranch families of Sonora. From time to time they invited us to their home. The Granich family originally emigrated from Yugoslavia. Mrs. Juan Granich was particularly fond of Rebecca and often stopped by with delicious grapefruit from her farm.

One of the side benefits of being in Hermosillo was that officers at the Consulate rotated on the diplomatic courier trip to Nogales, Sonora. The trip consisted of consultations with the US Consul in Nogales, Sonora, and an extra day to shop in Nogales, Arizona. We were able to buy frozen vegetables, still unavailable in the Hermosillo supermarkets. In 1967, Nogales, Arizona, had about 50,000 inhabitants. There was a great Mexican influence in Nogales. Most large supermarkets had bilingual salesclerks. I was impressed by the constant flow of Mexican people, goods and services between Sonora and Arizona.

At this time Consul General Barney Taylor suffered a heart attack and was recuperating at home. Consul Lois Roork very capably took over his duties during this period.

On a balmy evening near the end of November we were dinner guests of John and Dianne Scafe, in honor of Dr. Harkness, Counselor for Cultural Affairs at the Embassy. John, Public Affairs Officer in Hermosillo, had built a good reputation with Sonoran teachers and

## Library of Congress

students. We had interesting conversations and exchanges of ideas between the Mexican and American families.

In early December the winter tourist season began and so did an increase in the United States. protection case load. Some weeks, I would have as many as twenty cases of stranded American tourists to assist in Sonora. On one hand, I was looking after the welfare of an American student who was hospitalized and his brother, who was in jail. At the same time I had a death case of an eighty four year old retired American citizen in Alamos. Death cases in Mexico had to be handled quickly as Mexican law requires internment within twenty four hours. As soon as someone died in our consular district I would arrange for shipment of the remains to Tucson. There were times that the next of kin would come over but in most cases the details of the transshipment were handled by me on the telephone. One American prisoner, age 21, died in his cell of a drug overdose. Local authorities performed an autopsy. The father of the deceased accompanied me to the municipal hospital to identify the body.

I received, in my office, Licenciado (Attorney) Roberto Reynosa Davila, Rector of the University of Sonora in Hermosillo, on a get acquainted visit. He was accompanied by his niece, Licenciado Vasquez. Rector Davila was one of Hermosillo's most reputable lawyers and was permitted to practice law while he held the top academic post in Sonora. Later I had a chance to appreciate his skills as a defense lawyer in a case of two American prisoners.

I also had numerous US citizenship cases to litigate. They involved Mexicans who had emigrated to California, Arizona and Texas, married, and lived there. Their children often had claim to US citizenship, based on the father's or mother's residence in the United States. Citizenship and nationality questions appeared, at first glance, more complex, and I often had to refer to the Foreign Service manual to resolve these claims. After reviewing the details of each case I had to submit the cases to the State Department for final approval.



## Library of Congress

December 14, we held our first dinner at our home for Consul Lois Rook, Vice Consul Carolyn Allen, and also some Mexican employees.

I was also a guest at the distribution of diplomas of the US-Mexican Cultural Center in Hermosillo. The same week Ma#t# and I attended the Policeman's Ball at the old casino. On this occasion we represented the US Consulate General.

Just a few days before Christmas I had to go to Guaymas because three Americans who had been on a fishing trip were lost at sea near the port. After a thorough search by the Mexican Coast Guard and Guaymas police, only a part of the body of one American citizen was recovered. There was strong suspicion that sharks had devoured the others.

### Kino Bay Tragedy

In early January, 1968, we had one of the most tragic accidents at sea in Kino Bay. Three Americans, accompanied by a Mexican guide, Juan, from Hermosillo, had left Kino Bay with their outboard motor boat to fish. The spouses of the American tourists had stayed behind in a motel. Kino Bay, in Sonora, was located about one hour from Hermosillo. It could be reached along a narrow winding road from where we saw cacti and agricultural plains. The spouses notified us that their husbands had been missing for over twenty four hours. The winds had been unusually strong but they said that Juan was an expert fisherman and familiar with the fishing conditions. He had gone with many Americans before.

As soon as I learned of the missing Americans I rushed to Caverna Restaurant in Kino Bay where Consul General Taylor was waiting for me. When there was no word we suspected an accident. The Consul General and I were busy for days trying to keep abreast of the case, and answering questions of the local and American press. There were some negative press reports referring to "Foul Play." The worst part of the search and rescue

## Library of Congress

operation was that they did not come up with any bodies nor clothes, not even a piece of the fiberglass boat. Rescue teams were never able to recover anything.

As weeks passed with no closure, the Kino Bay tragedy was more difficult for the spouses to deal with. They were not able to obtain Mexican death certificates; we could only prepare a Foreign Service Presumptive Report of Death form at the Consulate . In most US states it takes up to seven years to prove that a missing person is presumed dead.

Twenty two years later, in March, 1990, Foreign Service Officer Robert Witajewski published an article in State magazine, recalling a similar accident in his article, History Repeats Itself in Hermosillo, Mexico. He stated, "It was on January 2, 1990, 22 years later, that a major disaster occurred in the Gulf of California. The Santa Barbara was adrift in the Gulf of California. Of the sixteen on board only two were ever rescued in the San Carlos-Guaymas area."

My friend and colleague, Robert Pastorino, who served with me in Hermosillo as Economic officer in 1969, and in 1990 was Deputy Chief of Mission in Mexico City, recalled his experience with the Kino Bay accident in an interview with Witajewski.

In retrospect I believe that the difference between the 1968 and 1990 disasters was that in the disappearance of a crew of four at Kino Bay no one was ever certain what had happened because nothing was ever found. The Santa Barbara was found, as well as two bodies.

Once the workload on the Kino Bay tragedy was under control I took an extended reconnaissance tour of other cities in our consular district of Sonora. I visited the city of Ciudad Obregon, a rich agricultural area. There are also many cultural artifacts of the Yaqui Indians who continue in their traditions.

I called on Mayor Xavier Bours Almeda. He was one of the influential politicians in Sonora and was often mentioned as a possible candidate for Governor. I also visited many district

## Library of Congress

attorneys and the chief of police. During my visit to Ciudad Obregon I stayed at the home of Leland and Mrs. Anderson, who were long-term American residents of Sonora. He was president of Caterpillar, the giant construction vehicle manufacturing firm. The Andersons had wide experience in business and personal contacts with Sonoran families. In the protection of American citizens he became a most reliable contact.

I next traveled to Navajoa, about 50 kilometers to the south of Obregon. There I spent a few hours with Mr. Quiros, mayor of the city, and became acquainted with local police officials. On my way back I stopped in Guaymas to meet Morton Berndt, American Director of the NASA Tracking Station there, a site where they track manned space flights. Morton showed me the impressive technological equipment at the station. Morton Berndt was as influential in the Guaymas-American community as Leland Anderson was in Ciudad Obregon. While I met the other members of the staff I also had the opportunity to speak with Oscar Ruiz Almeida, mayor of Guaymas.

On January 20, 1968, we attended the grand ball given by the Rotary Club of Hermosillo, at the Casino, in the presence of Governor of Sonora and Mrs. Faustino Felix. We were also invited to the home of Dr. and Mrs. Arthur Adolfo Felix. He was a famous Mexican surgeon and Director of the Social Security Hospital in Hermosillo.

In the Foreign Service we never lose sight of our nation's foreign policy priorities. It was clear to all of us working in Mexico in 1968 that the Vietnam war and the race riots had played an important role in the presidential election. The Johnson administration was committed to the freedom of South Vietnam and the sovereignty of South Korea. Everything that happened politically at home, such as social unrest and opposition to the Vietnam war, affected us in our role in the foreign service. Our priorities reflected the Administration's foreign policy objectives. It often happened that the host country's own foreign policies did not coincide with ours.

## Library of Congress

At the end of January, 1968, I had lunch at the San Alberto with the Federal District Attorney in Hermosillo, Licenciado Jaime Ortiz Sosa. He handled many federal crime cases in Sonora and was, of course, aware of drug violations of some of our American citizens. My contacts with him proved to be useful in evaluating the outcome of some of my protection cases involving American prisoners.

Every month I cabled to the State Department Office of Special Consular Services a progress report on the status of each American prisoner's legal case. Although the prisoners' families contacted us, the State Department needed to be informed with all details regarding the health and legal problems of incarcerated Americans.

I also met Dr. Quintero Arce, Archbishop of Hermosillo. He was intimately connected with the social and religious problems of Mexico. Originally he was from the state of San Luis Potosi. He told me about the need for priests if the church was to survive in Mexico. He said, "Hermosillo has only 50 active priests. Many Mexicans are nominal Catholics, but there is an indifference toward religion, especially among men, because of the lack of understanding of the spiritual and theological values of the church." Our first meeting developed into a good friendship and lasts to this day. At a later date the Archbishop helped me to get approval on the telephone of the marriage of Consul General Barfield and his bride, Constanza, in Tucson.

In Hermosillo I began to learn about the political party system in Mexico. On February 2, 1968, I met the mayor of Hermosillo, Jorge Munoz Valdez, at the municipal palace. He belonged to the Panista (PAN) opposition party, whereas Governor Faustino Felix was a member of the PRI, the majority party that had run Mexico for over 65 years. Because they belonged to different parties, the mayor and governor were often at odds in the political arena. We cultivated friendly relations with both Governor Felix and Mayor Munoz. With the Mayor we spoke about tourism and contacts between the border states of Arizona and

## Library of Congress

Sonora. That same week I paid a courtesy call on General Talamante, Chief of the State Judicial Police.

I went on my first diplomatic courier trip to Mexico City and stopped over in Mazatlan to exchange diplomatic pouches with Vice Consul Wilkins. On this brief stop I enjoyed the sandy beaches, palm trees, and mild climate of the Sinaloan seaport. This visit had been arranged to permit me to meet some of my counterparts at the Embassy. My consultations included talks with Joseph F. Henderson, Counselor for Consular Affairs, Consul General Tony Certosimo, and Consular Officers Cicali and Hugh Scott. Joe Henderson supervised all constituent posts in Mexico. I also visited with Personnel Officer Geraldine Oliva and Wallace Stuart, Counselor for Political Affairs, for whom I had worked in Panama City.

Joe Henderson told me that high on the Consular agenda was the issue of 7500 Mexicans, who had worked in the United States and retired in Mexico, and were entitled to social security benefits. However, they were going to lose their social security benefits if they did not meet US residence requirements. "The Mexican government," he said, "is putting a lot of pressure on Washington to work out a special treaty on social security, affecting these and future Mexican beneficiaries." Since then a treaty has been in effect for social security benefits of retirees in Mexico.

In the evening I was invited for dinner by Edythe Watson, then Communications Attach# at the Embassy. We had worked together in Panama and discussed the similarities and differences of the two posts.

March 22, 1968, we celebrated President Benito Juarez' birthday. He was one of the great reformist presidents of Mexico and is often called the "Patriot of the Americas." He lived at the same time as President Lincoln and they had much in common as far as human rights are concerned. Now, more than a century later, Mexico is somewhat isolated from the major crises of the world, but it is struggling to attain democratic and judicial reforms and has joined the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) with the United States

## Library of Congress

and Canada. In spite of several peso devaluations, Mexico has shown that it can put its economic and financial house in order.

At another gathering of the Mexican-American Institute I met Professor Villegas, Director General of Education in Sonora. The theme of the meeting was that Mexicans should learn English language skills in order to broaden their knowledge of the English speaking people of the world. To this day, I believe that diplomacy and education go hand in hand.

Two events in April, 1968, affected the domestic political scene in America: Dr. Martin Luther King's assassination in Tennessee and President Johnson's decision not to seek reelection in 1968. Dr. King had been a stabilizing force in the struggle for racial equality. It was a long, hot summer in the big cities of the United States. Many people saw Johnson's decision not to run as a setback for the Democratic party. Others saw it as an opportunity to back Senator Robert Kennedy as a dynamic young leader who could lead the Democratic party to victory in 1968.

A few weeks after Dr. King's assassination I received some calls from the Associated press in the States referring to the fact that the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) was looking for the alleged assassin of King, James Earl Ray. An Associated Press reporter said that an American by the name of Daniel Kennedy, who looked like the suspect, had been arrested by the Mexican police in Caborca, Sonora. They wanted me to check this out. The police had detained and questioned Kennedy, a 41 year old Baltimore man who was a "desert" mathematician. Police told me that they had arrested him erroneously because he looked like Ray. The matter was cleared up in a few days but the incident had nationwide coverage in the press and mentioned my name.

At the end of April I took care of two serious car accidents in which two American citizens were injured. When Americans were involved in car accidents in Mexico they could not immediately leave the country. They needed to get legal counseling and assistance from insurance agents, and clear the city of any responsibility. They were advised by our

## Library of Congress

Consulate to obtain legal counseling from a local Mexican attorney, who would familiarize himself with all aspects of the accident. The attorneys were usually able to determine whether the American citizen involved had any responsibility for the accident. They were usually very adept in expediting the paperwork in the local district attorney's office where the case was being handled, and the American citizen was permitted to leave the country. I knew Captain Raymundo Cervantes of the Mexican Highway Patrol, and Mr. Enrique Manzo, delegate of the Automobile Registration Office (with jurisdiction in Sonora, Baja California, and Sinaloa) on a personal basis. I took advantage of this solid contact to take American tourists with car problems to their offices. Today, when Americans enter Mexico, they obtain a special import permit for the duration of their stay. They also need to have money in their possession. At the port of entry, the importation of American cars was scrupulously supervised. The Mexican government did not allow their citizens to own or operate an American vehicle.

In early May, 1968, I flew to Pittsburgh to be near my father who underwent critical kidney surgery. This time there were regulations on the books that covered foreign service personnel family visitation rights and reimbursement for transportation.

### Reverberations in Mexico to the Senator Robert Kennedy Assassination

On June 6, 1968, Senator Robert Kennedy was assassinated at a primary rally in Los Angeles. We were all shocked in Hermosillo. Since I had worked for him in London, the tragic news was more poignant. His death stunned the people in Mexico because ever since JFK's death the Mexicans were immortalizing the Kennedy name. We received instructions from the State Department to fly American flags at half mast and to cancel all social engagements. Robert Kennedy's passion for human dignity, justice and peace has remained with us.

In the middle of June, the Consul General asked me to invite Federal District Attorney Licenciado Ortiz Sosa, Captain Cervantes, and Mr. Manzo for lunch. He also sent me

## Library of Congress

to Guaymas to entertain five police officials and District Attorneys Mr. Villase#or and Mr. Lopez Escalante. It was an occasion to visit Empalme, a small railroad town of about 30,000 people. I was told that it was the first time that a US consul had visited that municipality since the Consulate General had been opened in Hermosillo. I felt honored to represent the Consulate General at this official visit. I was received by Major Hector Garcia Ruiz and his staff. After a get acquainted talk, Mayor Ruiz took me in his station wagon for a ride around town. I visited the regional repair shop of the Ferrocarril Del Pacifico (a large Pacific Railroad repair shop), where they repair locomotives and trains. The program also included a visit to the primary, secondary and preparatory schools in Empalme.

At a working luncheon with Enrique Romero, director of the penitentiary and District Attorneys Woolfolk and Macias, in Hermosillo, we discussed US citizens protection cases.

On June 17, I drove to Nogales, Arizona, to attend a meeting with Mr. Cypert, officer in charge of the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS), and Consul Prichard. Mr. Cypert explained recent changes in the immigration bill signed by President Johnson. The Johnson bill did away with discrimination, especially toward Asian countries. We were informed that Latin America would be allotted 120,000 immigrant visa numbers per year. I took advantage of visiting Messrs. Carroon and Parish of the Carroon Mortuary in Nogales. They were cooperative in resolving transshipment of US remains in Sonora to other points in the United States. One of my key contacts for consular work was Jaime Carballo, Director of Tourism in Sonora.

The following week, in Hermosillo, I attended the Mexican Folklorico ballet at the Civic Auditorium and met Do#a Amalia Hernandez, Mexico's foremost folkloric ballet director.

At the end of June, 1968, the Taylors bid farewell to officials of the consular district and Lois Roork took over as Acting Principal Officer. It was then that I became involved in a border project between Sonora and Arizona. I had an exchange of letters with William J. Schafer, Pima County attorney in Tucson, on a possible exchange of visits between him



## Library of Congress

and District Attorney Macias of Hermosillo. Actually, it was the mayor of Tucson, James Corbett, who had expressed an interest in visiting Hermosillo to observe the system of criminal justice procedures. He was keen on learning about Mexico's crime rate, what they were doing about it, and if not, why not. The mayor's office felt that such exposure would be mutually beneficial.

On July 18, Mexico commemorated the death of President Benito Juarez. Most federal offices were closed and wreaths were put at the statues of Juarez and Alvaro Obregon (Mexican President from Sonora). The same week I had to process a repatriation loan for an American citizen who was stranded in the city and had no funds to return home. An American citizen may obtain a small loan at the US Consulate if circumstances beyond the citizen's control prevent his or her return home. We were allowed to pay only for a bus ticket from Hermosillo to the border at Nogales, Arizona. I had another repatriation loan request from a 61 year old mentally ill American who got lost in Navajoa, Sonora. I was finally able to contact his brother in San Diego who came to pick him up. I was also responsible for protection and welfare work in Los Mochis, Sinaloa, on the periphery of Sonora.

July 19, I received a surprise personal call from Ambassador Fulton Freeman, in Mexico City, to congratulate me on my promotion to Foreign Service Officer. He told me that I was doing a good job in Mexico. In conjunction with consultations at the Embassy I found myself in Taxco (Guerrero) and Cuernavaca (Morelos). I visited the Cortez Palace, in Cuernavaca, and became acquainted, for the first time, with Diego Rivera's murals. In the Taxco area many little churches are literally made by hand by Mexican Indians. A guide took me to the 17th century church of Santa Prisca and San Sebastian, with its seven golden altars. But since my time was limited I delved into the information on the US smelting company that used to have interests there. The silver mines were already nationalized and are now known as Acarca Mexicana.

## Library of Congress

When Richard Nixon was nominated by his party to be the presidential candidate in 1968, foreign service professionals believed that we would have a man with stature and knowledge in foreign affairs. Vice President Hubert Humphrey was also considered a formidable leader. The war in Vietnam had divided many people in the country and the violence on campus and in the inner cities had affected the social fabric of the nation. Social unrest was also prevalent in other countries. Mexican university students were very vocal in the summer of 1968, and when the heavy handed police tried to quell the University of Mexico City riot, in which several students were killed, Mexican President Gustavo Diaz Ordaz was criticized. Since this was on the eve of the Olympics, scheduled in Mexico City, many people doubted that this great sports event would occur peacefully.

Student discontent and labor strikes had broken out in the major cities of France and had a snowballing effect. Although there was a small improvement in US-Soviet relations under President Johnson, the Soviet Union's 1968 invasion of Czechoslovakia ignited fires for freedom and showed how imperative it was to keep a strong military presence in Western Europe.

On August 18, 1968, John Daniel Barfield assumed charge as the new Consul General. It was sad to see a good principal officer go, but there were advantages to working with a new Consul General. Every new foreign service officer who "comes on board" has his or her own special leadership talents and administrative innovations which strengthen the foreign service post. John Barfield proved to be that dynamic, charismatic diplomat. Like Barney Taylor, he expressed interest in the intricate workings of consular operations. He was sanguine about the importance of protection work. A native of Georgia, he had wide experience in Latin American policies and had recently been assigned in Brazil. John immediately embarked upon a number of projects and travels through Sonora. He asked me to be his key man for consular work and to set up a series of luncheons where he could meet local officials in Hermosillo who had been helpful to the Consulate. One of these projects took place on August 28 when he asked me to see the acting Governor

## Library of Congress

of Sonora, Cesar Gandara. John had received special instructions from Washington regarding a complex estate case involving an American citizen. He wanted me to talk to him and find out if any precedents could be set in this case.

We first had John and Lois Roork over for dinner at our home. A few days later I arranged a luncheon at the San Alberto where I introduced some Hermosillo officials to John. They were Licenciado Jacinto Lozano Cardenas, Federal District Attorney; Jose Flores Romo, Chief of Customs; Moreno Garcia, Chief of Hermosillo Police; Enrique Manzo of the Vehicle Registry office; Licenciado Miranda Romero, secretary of the Mayor of Hermosillo; Carlos Cumming, of the State Judicial Police; Messrs. Montoya and Salazar, of the Investigation Department of the Hermosillo Police; and Mr. Cholula, Manager of the airport. On September 12, we had a similar lunch for Mrs. Elsa de Banderas Silva, President of the Red Cross. The Mexican Red Cross was cooperative with the Consulate on accident cases involving American tourists. Commander Katasse and Captain Cervantes were also at the lunch.

In the evening John and I were invited by Hermosillo Mayor Jorge Valdez to the occasion of a visit by the Chorus of the City of Norwalk, California. Hermosillo and Norwalk were sister cities. With Mayor Apodaca of Norwalk we shared the table of honor.

As Mexican tradition goes, on September 15, 1810, Father Hidalgo rang the church bell in Dolores, Guanajuato, and cried for Mexican independence. In the late evening of September 15, we were guests at a reception by Governor of Sonora Faustino Felix Serna at the Palace to celebrate the 158th anniversary of the Mexican call for independence (El Grito). On this evening the Governor appeared on the balcony of the Palace and waved the Mexican flag and shouted, "Viva Mexico!" The golden room of the Palace was packed with socialites and Sonoran officials. Prior to the independence reception many of us attended the folkloric ballet of Sonora that performed pre-Colombian dances.

## Library of Congress

September 19 I went to a State of Sonora judicial inspection at a farm site near Carbo, seven km. from Hermosillo, to act as a consular observer in the case of an American citizen-rancher who had been accused of stealing 300 head of cattle from his neighbors. The Consulate had received a Congressional interest inquiry. The judge, attorneys, and criminal experts of both parties accompanied us to the site.

Under the Consular treaty with Mexico, there is a provision that permits a Consular officer to attend court sessions in which US citizens are involved. My job was to see to it that the American rancher was treated justly, according to the laws of Mexico, and to keep the State Department up to date on the judicial actions taken in Sonora. Teaching at the University of Sonora

In the fall of 1968 I was offered an opportunity to teach a course in French at the University of Sonora, in Hermosillo. The course was for first year French students, and was given by the Department of Letters and Languages. The Consul General approved it, and the University obtained a work permit for me. At that time it was unusual for foreign service personnel to work on the open market, although English teaching at bi-national centers for government employees and dependents was a common practice overseas.

I started teaching the evening of September 23, 1968, and continued through June, 1969. I had eight students in my class. Then, in 1969, during my last summer in Hermosillo, I taught an English class to five Sonoran students who worked in chemical engineering. At that time, many Mexican students wanted to qualify for scholarships in the United States. One of the requirements was proficiency in English. It was believed that future scientists would have to master English, which is the language in which most of the research material was written. Many scientific advances emanated from the United States.

My teaching project coincided with a deteriorating political climate in Mexico City. Following a student uprising, the Mexican Army took over the campus of the University of Mexico and its Rector resigned. There were leftist groups involved in this unrest. The

## Library of Congress

Federation of University Students, in Hermosillo, called a general meeting to discuss the situation in the capital. The Hermosillo students opposed the Government's occupation of the University in Mexico City and the fatal shooting of Mexican students. President Gustavo Diaz Ordaz had two more years left before his term expired. These events could not have come at a worse time because the world Olympics were to start in Mexico City in mid October.

At the end of September, 1968, Reynosa Davila, Rector of the University in Hermosillo, under heavy pressure from the students, resigned. He was finishing the term of former Rector Canalle. The University Board decided to take matters into their own hands. A student strike caused classes to be dismissed for two weeks. Classes resumed when the students finally settled for peace and harmony. In spite of the student discontent on the Mexican campuses, the Olympics proved to be a spectacular sports event.

On October 12 we were invited to a buffet reception at the Governor's Palace. Governor Felix Serna had invited all Consulate General officers to the occasion of his "Informe" (State of the State address). It is an annual report on the government of Sonora's economic and social projects.

### Official Visit to Alamos

Following this heavy social season the Consul General and I drove to Alamos, Sonora, on an official visit. It is an old, colonial type city, set at the foot of the Sierra Madre Mountains, and was once the capital of Sonora. It had since become a colony for retired Americans. We stayed at the Casa de Tesoras and were guests at the home of Mrs. Marjorie Allan. In her 200 year old Spanish colonial home she arranged for us to meet Americans and Alamos dignitaries. Americans retired in Alamos appreciated a visit from US Consular officials.

Consul General Barfield and I met at the official residence with L. Fuentes Martinez, Chief of Hermosillo Police Investigations; Mr. Garcia Oca#o, Federal Immigration representative

## Library of Congress

in Hermosillo; Licenciado Ricardo Valenzuela, international lawyer; and Humberto Tapia. Valenzuela received his training at the University of Brussels, and had great knowledge in international and public affairs. He served on the Advisory Board of the University of Sonora and also taught French there.

When quiet had returned to the campus, Dr. Frederico Sotello, a famous orthopedic surgeon, was elected as new Rector of the University. I got to know him better at a wedding reception at the home of the Granich family. We also entertained Judge Irene Vidales. She was the first woman judge appointed to the bench in Hermosillo. She headed the Civil Registry office, which took care of the registration of births, deaths, and marriages. The Civil Registry offices come under the jurisdiction of the state, rather than the municipality. Judge Vidales' husband worked in the Judicial Department of the Governor of Sonora.

The official character of these social events are not to be discounted. The Consul's personal ties with people of the host country create and reflect a positive image of the United States. A consular officer is often in contact with a wide spectrum of society. The day to day chores of consular work help to develop friendships.

One of these contacts was with Mrs. Enriqueta de Parodi, State Senator of Sonora. She was also a known writer on Sonora and historic figures of the state. One day we invited her for dinner. She had a great sense of humor and we remained friends. She wrote a book on Dr. Alfonso Ortiz Tirado, a scientist and artist from Alamos.

In early January, I was kept busy with a car accident in which two Americans were killed. Another case, in the sugar cane center of Los Mochis, Sinaloa, where US rancher, Charles Maftle was murdered, required contacts on various levels.

On January 20, 1969, I flew to Mexico City for consultations. It was the inauguration of Richard Nixon, our 37th President. I watched the ceremony, via Telstar, in the Embassy theater. After talking with Joe Henderson and Vice Consul Don Welter, I took off a few

## Library of Congress

hours to visit the Mexican pyramids at Teotihuacan, 27 km. from the capital. The ruins of this pre-Colombian city are almost 2000 years old. I saw the Pyramid of the Sun and its smaller counterpart, for the moon. Tourists pass a series of vendors before reaching the ruins.

At that time there was friction between the United States and Mexico resulting from a US ban on the export of Mexican tomatoes to the United States. Many Mexican businessmen had lost money. Press reports stated that the US government was pressured by the tomato growers in Florida. It became one of President Nixon's first foreign relations problems with Mexico.

### Labor Relations Problems

At this time Paramount motion pictures was shooting the film *Catch 22* in Guaymas, Sonora, directed by Mike Nichols. Orson Wells and Anthony Perkins were in the cast. In January, 1969, the director laid off 150 American actors and other personnel from the Tucson area. I received a call from the Union representative that they would be put in buses and escorted by the Guaymas police to the border at Nogales. The laid-off workers wanted to meet with a Consular official in Hermosillo before heading for the border, to complain about the labor dispute. I met them at the city limits in Hermosillo and talked with the Union representative and Paramount manager Jerry Best. A reporter from *The Daily Citizen*, a Tucson paper, was also present. (Any problems overseas, personal or otherwise, reach the Consulate one way or another. We are required to send a Consular representative to the scene to determine whether the Consulate can facilitate solutions. In this case, they just needed to air their complaints.) We advised them to return to the States (a six hour drive), then to take the matter up with their union. They were bused to the Nogales border with no further incident.

At the end of January I faced a heavy load of US protection cases: two American students were killed on the highway, a couple from Los Angeles, who were in Sonora for their

## Library of Congress

honeymoon, had hit a crossing cow. The woman had to have surgery in Guaymas for serious head injuries and was given a small chance of survival. I contacted her family and they flew over to be at her bedside.

In February, 1969 I met Alfonso Reina Celaya, Minister of Agriculture of Sonora. At the American-Mexican Institute I was introduced to Mexican painter, Amao. He presented his paintings in Hermosillo. His works are full of mysticism and colors. He painted some scenes of Madero Park and the church "Capilla del Carmen" in Hermosillo.

During a February 10 courier flight to Tucson, I talked with Harold Milks, Latin American Editor of the Arizona Republic. He was a good friend of the Consulate and had traveled extensively in Latin America. He was particularly interested in consular activities and the welfare and whereabouts cases of US citizens. Whenever appropriate I would cooperate with him.

We spent the opening of Carnaval, February 15, 1969, in Guaymas, as guests of Licenciado Octavio Villaseñor, district attorney. Octavio and his wife wanted us to be present for the baptism of their two week old baby son. It was an all day affair, complete with Mariachi music by a group of Mexican artists performing with violin and trumpet, a tradition that emerged at big wedding parties during the French occupation of Mexico (the word is derived from the French word for "marriage"). They prepared a traditional pork roast and shrimp buffet with Mexican tortillas. In my honor they had hung a large tapestry of President Kennedy in the living room.

In 1969, Mexico experienced a period of economic development, but it was generally believed that it would not keep up with the rapid population growth. At that time, experts estimated that they would need 400,000 new jobs each year. This was not an easy goal to attain considering the lack of industrialization infrastructure. The State of Sonora had some advantages. It was a rich livestock area where landed people could find some part



## Library of Congress

time labor on ranches and in the fields. Most Latin American countries suffered chronic unemployment and substandard economic conditions.

In February, 1969, the Nixon administration faced a difficult situation in Peru. The Peruvian government expropriated some American property. This aggravated our relations with Peru since they also had captured an American shrimp boat. American Embassy political officers argued that American political leadership in Latin America was needed to keep our relations with Latin America on an even keel. They warned us that economic and social progress worked at a slower pace than in an industrialized nation.

Our Consulate General was also faced with a rotation of American officers. Vice Consul Carolyn Allen, of our visa section, was reassigned to Bogota. Mary Gerber replaced her. Our good friend, Administrative Assistant Mae Worsham, returned to Washington and was replaced by Mary Schenk. Our Administrative Officer, Harry Grisser, was posted to Belem, Brazil. This entailed retraining new officers. Although the new arrivals were experienced officers, they needed familiarization with job requirements in Sonora. My workload increased when Consul Prichard told me that four American prisoners tried to escape from the Nogales jail and had been transferred to the State Penitentiary, in Hermosillo.

At Easter time Hermosillo looked deserted because local families leave for the country during Holy Week. But there was an influx of American students and tourists driving through the main street in Hermosillo, which leads to Guaymas and Mazatlan. Car accidents were daily occurrences during the Easter recess.

On April 3, 1969, there was a serious accident on the road to Kino Bay. An American couple, who were towing a trailer, hit and killed a five year old Mexican boy. This type of tragedy always causes distress and anxiety for both the family of the victim and the American tourists involved. I always tried to give the Americans a list of local attorneys to choose from. Quick access to a local lawyer expedites their case, as American drivers

## Library of Congress

need to be represented in the office of the district attorney and the judge. According to Mexican law, the involved tourist is incarcerated during the preliminary 72 hours of investigation.

Besides a few hours visit in the old capital of Ures, I spent Easter weekend visiting injured Americans in the General Hospital, arranging funerals and helping arrested American tourists. On Easter Sunday, the Mexican wife of an American farmer in Kino Bay was murdered. She was 42 years old. Her sons and an American friend were held for questioning.

As Consular Officer I learned about Mexican health issues. Mexicans who worked for the government were covered under the Mexican social security system. Others not working for any government agency could go to the General Hospital and receive free emergency medical treatment and medicine. In recent years social security medical benefits became available to general workers as long as their employer covered them. Mexico is also advanced in its campaign for national vaccinations against polio and other childhood diseases.

Many of our American tourists who needed medical care were hospitalized in private clinics. The cost of a room in one of these clinics in the late 1960s was about \$10 per day. I was impressed by the highly professional care patients received. Many Mexican doctors and surgeons had done graduate work in stateside medical schools.

Unemployment benefits, as we know them in the United States and Europe, were not available in Mexico. The Mexican government did provide basic staples, free milk, and medicine for lower income people.

I also had a case of an American citizen who had set up a fishmeal plant in Hermosillo. He had the backing of a US stockholder. A New York lawyer called to see whether the Consulate could offer its good offices to recover the money of his investment. There were

## Library of Congress

many similar cases — we could only provide facilitative services, such as contacting the parties involved and showing Consular interest.

We also had cases of selective service involving dual nationals (Mexican-Americans). They had to register for US military service at the age of 18, whether or not they lived in the United States. This registration was done before the consular officer. Many were hesitant to show up because they were concerned that they would be sent to Vietnam.

President Charles de Gaulle's political defeat, in April, 1969, was a significant international development that was widely covered in the Mexican press. His departure left a political vacuum in France. Although he was held in some esteem by Mexican officials, it was generally felt that his exit would create an opportunity to reinvigorate the Atlantic Alliance begun after World War II. His successor, President George Pompidou, was more flexible in foreign affairs issues with the United States.

On May 3, there was a command performance at the Hermosillo airport to welcome US Minister and Mrs. Henry Dearborn, who made an official visit to Sonora. He was Chargé d'Affaires in Mexico City, pending the Senate's confirmation of Ambassador Robert H. McBride to Mexico. Mr. Barfield arranged a reception for 300 Sonoran officials to meet him.

Also at this time, Vice Consul Robert Pastorino and his family arrived at post as Economic Officer, replacing George Durgan. We had George and his wife, Judy, over for dinner. Robert was also cross trained for consular work and prepared to take over my duties when necessary.

Once a year, the job performance of foreign service personnel is evaluated. Much effort goes into this annual procedure. In Hermosillo, the preparing officer was Consul General Barfield. The reviewing officer is always a higher ranking FSO than the preparing officer. In my case it was Mr. Joseph Henderson, Counselor for Consular Affairs at the Embassy, who reviewed John's evaluation of me. There was, at that time, a secret part to the

## Library of Congress

performance evaluation that made some recommendations on future assignments. This part was not available to the employee.

In mid May, President Nixon sent a special mission, headed by New York Governor Nelson Rockefeller, to Latin America. It was believed to be Mr. Nixon's goal to reformulate US foreign policy toward Latin America. The Rockefeller party made its first stay in Mexico City and, unlike in Honduras and Guatemala, received a favorable reaction in Mexico. In the late 1960s, Latin American countries looked for an active US role with their economic trade and social problems. The wave of student disorders in Latin America that followed the Rockefeller visit was not an anti-US campaign as such. It only triggered it. It was an outburst of social displeasure with prevailing economic conditions.

In early June, 1969, there were celebrations in Hermosillo for Archbishop Juan Navarette y Guerrero's Golden Jubilee as Bishop. He was the first Catholic bishop of Sonora. There were reports that he endured many hardships during the persecution of the church in Mexico after World War I. The Catholic Church in Mexico had become very powerful, and President Elias Calles, wanting to restrict that power, closed all the churches. Unlike Spain, church and state are separated. The Church was not allowed to own property and priests could not overtly exhibit Catholic traditions, such as processions. A mass, said in the original Yaqui Indian language was included in the program.

An article appeared in the Nogales, Arizona newspaper in June, 1969, about a possible closing of our consulate in Nogales. Nogales had many protection cases, including 20 US citizens in jail. It was not until September that Washington confirmed the closure.

Early in his administration, President Nixon showed great interest in foreign travel, especially in countries behind the Iron Curtain. His trip to Romania in July, 1969, and his private visit to Poland earlier in the year, showed this. Mr. Nixon developed these foreign policy ventures as Vice President under President Eisenhower, and in the early 1970s became an architect of détente with the USSR and opening the doors to China.

## Library of Congress

On July 4, 1969, I went on a ten hour bus ride from Mexico City to Acapulco, Guerrero. Late in the evening, I took a cruise around the bay of Acapulco from where I saw the homes of Frank Sinatra, John Wayne, and the blue villa where President and Mrs. Kennedy spent their honeymoon. The tropical beauty of the area is unforgettable.

In Puebla I saw many colonial style homes and churches. I remember the Cathedral of the Virgin of the Angels and its splendid baroque interior, with side altars built in the main altar. A Mexican lady connoisseur in Guanajuato told me in later years that Puebla has the nicest churches in Mexico. I visited the Jose Luis Bello Gonzalez museum in downtown Puebla. It has a rich collection of French objets d'art.

### Mexican Response to the US Landing on the Moon

On July 22, 1969, at 1:15 p.m. Hermosillo time, I watched the descent of Apollo 11 to the lunar surface. Neil Armstrong's first historic walk on the moon was a spectacular event and was covered on Mexican TV. We received many calls and telegrams in the office, including some from Mexican President Diaz Ordaz. Mexicans were in awe of the US space program. The lunar landing was the culmination of many years of hard work in the United States. It was the success of our private enterprise system, industrial productivity, and organizational ingenuity. President Kennedy started it, and our people's spirit of teamwork made it a national goal and accomplishment.

Two days later we were invited to the home of John and Perdy Scafe for a "Splash down party," and to watch the return of the Apollo 11 crew. There was worldwide admiration for the courage of the US space program, and it was a boost to President Nixon's subsequent travels to Asia. Although Nixon's priorities were in armament talks with the USSR, his administration also opened negotiations that led to establishing consulates in each other's countries. It eventually made it possible to open a Soviet Consulate in San Francisco and a US Consulate in St. Petersburg. This agreement augured well as American travel in the late 1960s increased at a rapid pace.

## Library of Congress

In early August I had an unexpected visit from my friend, the mayor of Empalme, Sonora. One of his constituents had received medical care from a Texas hospital. Since the bill was quite high, he wanted to know whether I could call the hospital director to obtain a waiver and allow monthly payments. My talk with the Texas hospital director resulted in him waiving the medical fees altogether. This, he said, "was a gesture of friendship to Mexico." This case created goodwill between our two countries. I felt I had been instrumental in working this out.

At the end of August I received my reassignment to the Consulate General at St. John, New Brunswick, Canada, replacing Foreign Service Officer Richard Howell. From a career standpoint it was an ideal assignment, as I would be the only other American officer at the post besides Consul General Wesley E. Jorgensen. He suggested that I attend the International Trade Seminar,, in Washington, in October, as there would be much emphasis on US exports.

In September, 1969, diplomatic tensions were high between the United States and Mexico. The US government began a pilot inspection program of all vehicles entering at Nogales and Tijuana. They began to screen vehicles for possible drug smuggling. Mexican officials resented this and businesses on the US-Mexican border retaliated by not buying American products.

At the end of September Consul General and Mrs. John D. Barfield and Consul Lois Roork held farewell parties for us. Many Mexican officials and friends attended. The last days were busy ones saying goodbye. We moved into the San Alberto Hotel and invited some of my students for a last reunion before we left Hermosillo for home on October 4.

### CHAPTER XICANADA, 1970

My assignment to St. John had been canceled because the Nixon administration, for budgetary reasons, decided to close the consulates in Windsor and St. John. Instead I

## Library of Congress

would go to Halifax, Nova Scotia. Mr. Wilson, head of the European office covering posts in Canada, told me that Halifax would be absorbing the consular workload previously handled by St. John. I attended the International Economic Seminar at the Foreign Service Institute. It brought me up to date on factors involving our balance of payments dilemma for the 1970s.

October 27, 1969, I visited my old friend, Patrick Cardinal O'Boyle, of Washington, DC. I knew him since my years at Georgetown. He was a native of Scranton, Pennsylvania, and had shown an interest in my parents' immigration to Pennsylvania. He believed that Pittsburgh was one of America's finest immigrant cities.

On January 16, 1970, twelve weeks later, we took off from Pittsburgh airport for Halifax, Canada. Consul Arthur L. Price met us and helped us with Canadian Customs. During the twenty minute drive to downtown Halifax, Art briefed me on some of the responsibilities I would be involved in. I learned that it was a formal post, with a wide range of social obligations. Before we checked into the Citadel Inn Motel, Nancy Price invited us for dinner at her home.

The Consulate General was located in the Bank of Nova Scotia building. Consul General Alexander Peaslee welcomed me to the office. I was impressed by his frank talk on the post's political and consular objectives, which were to stabilize US-Canadian relations. He said that besides my visa and citizenship duties, I would be expected to participate in protocol functions.

I was impressed by Mr. Peaslee's intellectual background. His specialty was Chinese history and Asian affairs. He was also well versed in US-Canadian relations. Both he and Mrs. Peaslee were teaching at Mount Saint Vincent University (Catholic college in Halifax). Consul Price and his wife also held impressive academic credentials. Every morning Consul General Peaslee would have a small ten minute staff meeting. It grew into an interesting roundup of political and cultural topics.

## Library of Congress

Halifax is an attractive port city. I was often reminded that it was from here that the “Liberty Ships” sailed to Europe at the beginning of World War II. Consul General Peaslee did not waste time introducing me to a number of local officials and other foreign diplomats in the Province. At a lunch at the Halifax Business Club he introduced me to Mr. T. W. Robinson, British Trade Commissioner (equivalent of Consul), and paid a call on Superintendent R. J. Ross, chief of the Royal Mounted Canadian Police of Nova Scotia.

Besides calling on Canadian officials we went apartment hunting. It did not take long to find a nice apartment in a wooded pine tree area of Clayton Park. Our quick settling in helped me to focus on my consular work.

### Protocol Calls

On January 27 the Consul General introduced me to the honorable G.I. Smith, Premier of the Province of Nova Scotia, at Province House, the historic legislative building. Premier Smith was a Progressive Conservative and quite a popular official, with a great sense of humor. I also met Mr. G. A. Reagan, a liberal and the leader of the opposition party in the Province of Nova Scotia. Under the Federalist system of government in Canada, the federal government of Ottawa is independent from the Provinces.

Besides the protocol visits, we issued immigrant and non immigrant visas for all the maritime provinces of Canada (Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island). When reference is made to the Atlantic Provinces it includes the above and Newfoundland.

On January 26, 1970, I received a Department of External Affairs note of the Canadian government's recognition of my consular commission. This official note was sent to the US Embassy in Ottawa. It accorded definitive recognition of my status as Vice Consul. It later appeared in the issue of the Canada Gazette.



## Library of Congress

Consul General Peaslee observed every detail of diplomatic protocol. He remarked: "Now that the note has been received you can officially call on the Mayor of Halifax." He accompanied me to his Worship, Mayor Allan O'Brien, at the Halifax City Hall. It was a pleasant event. We discussed economic issues of Nova Scotia and learned that Volvo, the Swedish car factory, planned to expand their facilities in Halifax in order to export Volvos to the United States.

The Lieutenant Governor of Nova Scotia, Victor de B. Oland, received me the next month at Government House, a protocol meeting to recognize my official accreditation as consular officer. It went well, but a few hours later I developed a high fever. A Canadian doctor advised me to cancel appointments, and I stayed in bed several days to recuperate from exhaustion.

### US Prisoners

I went on my first consular trip, February 3, through Nova Scotia and New Brunswick. For the first time I drove on the Trans Canada highway. The trip was hazardous because of unexpected strong winds and rain storms. I stopped in Springhill, Nova Scotia, to visit the federal prison. It is a minimum security institution with about 200 inmates. I talked to three incarcerated Americans. A catholic priest who worked as a social worker showed me the modern compound, which included living quarters and industrial vocational areas where inmates learned different trades. I talked with director warden Hamilton. He said, "Every prisoner of the maritime provinces is first processed at the Federal Penitentiary in Dorchester, New Brunswick, and are then sent to various prisons." A convicted prisoner can apply for parole after having served one third of his sentence. Such action is decided by the Canadian National Parole Board. When US citizens were eligible for parole they were served with deportation papers. My next visit was in Moncton, a French cultural stronghold. French speaking Canadians in the Maritime Provinces are called Acadians. Many earn their living by farming.

## Library of Congress

I then stopped in Dorchester and saw three other American inmates. I had a good talk with each one. They appeared satisfied with living conditions and took advantage of vocational reading. Canadian prisons would put some of US and Mexican prisons to shame. Everything was clean and well organized. There appeared to be no discontent or violence.

I spent the night at St. John, New Brunswick (a former loyalist stronghold), and met Consul General Jorgensen and Vice consul Richard Howell. They were both preparing for the post's closure March 1.

On the drive back, we noticed how the scenery in New Brunswick and Nova Scotia had long, well kept highways and stands of pine trees. Service stations included ESSO, Gulf Oil, Texaco, and Irving Oil. American investment in Canada was high. I saw a CBC (Canadian Broadcasting Company) TV documentary which showed Canadian concerns with the increase of US investment. In 1970 we felt a strong Canadian nationalist sentiment related to US-Canadian trade and economic issues, but not as much as compared to the nationalist feelings in Mexico. The Canadian economy was very much connected to the North American economy. Both countries were also determined to fight inflation.

### Visa Work in Halifax

In Halifax, I became involved in the adjudication of immigrant and nonimmigrant visas. Many Canadians wanted to immigrate to the United States. Some professionals were qualified, but for many others there was a long waiting list. The labor market in 1970 was not as bright as in the 1950s. The Department of Labor, in conjunction with Immigration and Naturalization Service, approved the jobs which could not be filled by Americans. One of the crucial points for adjudication was the papers offering employment in the United States. I often called potential employers in the States to confirm such job offers.

## Library of Congress

We also issued a large number of nonimmigrant visas. Some of the tourist applications in Halifax were difficult to adjudicate. There were many Oriental students at Dalhousie and St. Mary's Universities who studied medicine and nursing. Many of these graduates wanted to work in the US, but not all doctors were qualified to practice medicine in the United States. For example, some Indian and Pakistani doctors who worked in a Canadian hospital wanted to emigrate to the United States. These Third World nationals needed to take tests in medicine and English to prove that they were eligible and able to practice medicine in the United States. Canadian doctors who applied for such visas usually did not encounter difficulties as they spoke English.

The tourist visa load was a mixed bag. I had nurses from Panama applying for tourist visas, a family from Argentina applying for a visa to work in Boston, and a Belgian girl (brought up in Zaire) teaching in Dartmouth and engaged to a American doctor whom she met at Louvain University. There were fianc# visas for that. One day I had a Greek-Egyptian lady from Alexandria, U.A.R., who applied for a passport for her US citizen son. I also had a large number of Eastern Europeans (especially from Czechoslovakia) applying for tourist visas. I saw Jose Garcia, the heavyweight champion of Venezuela, who came to apply for a visa so he could fight in Madison Square Garden. This caused quite an excitement in the office.

Our stay in Halifax was a plus for our daughter, Rebecca. She entered Tot Dyke Nursery School, and with the company of other children, quickly learned English. It was at that time that we became friends with Dennis and Barbara Landers, of New Zealand, whose daughter also attended Rebecca' school.

### Opening of Nova Scotia Legislature

Ma## I attended the opening of the provincial Legislature of Nova Scotia on February 19. It was the highlight of protocol for us. Lt. Governor Victor de B. Oland read his speech from the throne and we joined other consuls, judges, and government officials in

## Library of Congress

reserved gallery honor seats. British Consul and Mrs. T. W. Robinson, and other consular representatives in Halifax, were present. Just before the event we went to the Legislature Library where Premier and Mrs. Ian Smith greeted us. Although the Lt. Governor is the representative of the Queen, his speech was prepared by Mr. Smith's government, the administration in power. The ceremony was full of English traditions: a gun salute, honor guard, and representatives of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police. Afterwards, we went to Government House where a reception was held by Governor and Mrs. Oland. There I talked with Mrs. McKinnon, wife of the Supreme Court Justice; Mrs. Cooper of the Supreme Court; Mr. Crosby, Attorney with the Provincial government; Commander and Mrs. John R. Ross, of the RCM Police; and Mr. Snowe, Minister of Housing of Nova Scotia. Each province in Canada has a Lieutenant Governor, and in Ottawa there is the Governor General, directly accountable to the Queen of England. (There are ten provinces and two territories.)

The Provincial Legislature was in session for two months. There were many urgent economic and social problems on the 1970 legislative agenda. One was the heavy water plant in Sydney which had so far been a fiasco. There were also talks on the Federal and Provincial levels regarding rent controls and inflation. I was able to judge from my visa interviews that Halifax and Toronto were expensive cities to live in. Rents in Boston were fifteen percent cheaper than in Halifax, and groceries were usually eight percent higher than in the US

On February 25 I was received by his Excellency, James Hayes, Catholic Archbishop of Halifax. We talked for an hour in the drawing room of the Chancellery, a handsome residence on the historic "arm," a lake on Coburg Street. His secretary, Father Buckley, served sherry. We discussed the situation of the Catholic church in Canada. The Prelate pointed out that forty eight percent of the people in Halifax were Catholic, compared with thirty five percent in the Province of Nova Scotia. This represented a substantial minority. He remarked, "Many Irish and Highlanders from Scotland were the first Catholics to settle

## Library of Congress

in Nova Scotia.” He added that the Protestants owned much of the rural property, whereas Catholics had property in the urban areas.

We touched on the diplomatic relations between the Canadian government and the Vatican. He said, “Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau, who is a catholic, insisted on having diplomatic relations with the Vatican in spite of traditional Protestant opposition.”

The Archbishop impressed me as a man of vision and a down to earth church leader. He invited me for lunch. We were joined by his secretary and two retired American priests who also lived at the residence. During lunch I learned that priests and ministers in Nova Scotia were the only ones permitted by law to perform marriages. Although the civilian type of marriage is allowed in the Province, most persons in Nova Scotia are married by a priest or minister. The marriage document is signed by a priest or minister and has legal validity in the courts. My host remarked that the French Acadians had never experienced secularism, which had affected the Catholics in France. He also referred to the Catholic Bishops' meetings between the United States and Canada. He said, “It helps to exchange ideas on how to manage Catholic church affairs in North America.”

I met with Mr. Falker of the US Border Patrol in Bangor, Maine. The border patrol is the legal enforcing arm of the Department of Justice. They look for illegal entries and the smuggling of persons across the US-Canadian border.

The office workload was normal but the diplomatic social events gave us little time to wind down. On an average, we had about four formal receptions to attend per week. Many NATO ships visited the Port of Halifax so there were many social functions at the port and Canadian military bases, which we attended.

We were invited for cocktails aboard a French escort ship, the Commandant Beauvais. This vessel helped French fishing boats along the islands of St. Pierre and Miquelon (near Newfoundland). Besides French Consul Michel Ribordy, many Halifax officials were present. We also were hosts at home for drinks for Charles Baislee, Chief of

## Library of Congress

Protocol of the Nova Scotian government, and Rosalie Comeau (who was Consul General Peaslee's secretary). Baislee was like an elder statesman in Nova Scotia. He was very knowledgeable on the intricacies of Nova Scotian politics. Charles also had a good sense of humor.

During my term in Halifax, Mr. Oldland, City Manager of Oklahoma City, was appointed as City Manager in Halifax. Canadian mayors often hired US city managers.

Problems arose at Dalhousie University, in Halifax, when students began a "sit in" in President Hick's office. They said they wanted more voice in the management of the university. On April 16 we received a confidential report from the Federal Canadian police that left wing students, headed by Dr. McKinnen from St. Mary's University, would have a "sit in" at the US Consulate General and take Consul General Peaslee hostage. They planned a mock trial on the Vietnam War, in the presence of Mr. Sullivan, a well known TV representative in Halifax. Police and private detectives occupied several floors of the Nova Scotia Bank building where our offices were located. Fortunately there was no serious incident. The student group only presented a written protest against US military action in Southeast Asia and the dispatch of troops to Cambodia.

If things remained relatively calm in Halifax, the Cambodian crisis caused discontent and criticism in other parts of Canada. In Toronto and Montreal there were demonstrations in front of our consulates to protect against our involvement in Southeast Asia. The former Prime Minister of Canada, John Diefenbaker, stated, "I know President Nixon well. I am prepared to wait until the final outcome is known."

Canada also claimed jurisdiction over extensive areas of arctic waters. Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau introduced legislation in the Canadian Parliament which would give Canadian authority over an area of 100 nautical miles. The United States recognized only a three mile limit of territorial waters, but, these frictions never caused great harm to US-Canada relations.

## Library of Congress

On April 20 we attended a reception at the US residence for Leopold Le Clerc, public affairs officer of our embassy in Ottawa. We met some interesting people from the news media: Mr. Kennedy, President of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation; Mr. Holbrook, President of Nova Scotia Technical College; and Mr. Doucet with an independent TV company. Halifax had two channels (3 and 5). Channel 3 was sponsored by the government and Channel 5 by private investors. I also met the Pattersons, who had a radio station in Dartmouth, and Mr. Brailey with the Canadian press.

April 24, we went on board the Lt. Marlene Mathis, of the US Navy. This vessel was attached to Headquarters of the Canadian Shearwater Naval Base in Dartmouth. Shearwater Naval Base in Dartmouth was the largest Canadian naval base. There were two American officers, assigned to Dartmouth, who learned Canadian techniques of landing helicopters on submarines and aircraft carriers. Canadian personnel were also routinely sent to the Strategic Allied Commander, Atlantic (SACLANT) Headquarters, in Norfolk, Virginia.

In late April, US Ambassador to Canada, Adolph Schmidt, arrived in Halifax for an official visit. We all went to the Halifax International airport to welcome him. Following tea with the Governor and Mrs. Oland at Governor's House, we attended a dinner for Ambassador and Mrs. Schmidt at the residence of Consul General Peaslee. It was an intimate dinner which gave us the opportunity to get acquainted with our Ambassador. It so happened that they were from Pittsburgh, and Ambassador Schmidt had been Vice Governor of the Mellon interests. We had a lot of things in common to talk about. Being a political appointee he supported the economic policies of President Nixon. The Ambassador told me that President Nixon would keep inflation under control and that it was a government priority to improve the balance of payments. He stated that the Democrats had created large deficits while the Republicans under Eisenhower and Nixon "had attempted to pay as they went along."

## Library of Congress

Two major social events took place in honor of Ambassador Schmidt: a reception for Nova Scotia officials, headed by Premier Smith and Mr. Reagan, leader of the liberal opposition party, and a formal dinner at the Nova Scotia Hotel, by the Province of Nova Scotia. The Ambassador then hosted a dinner at the Halifax Club to which we were also invited.

On May 5, the population of the Province of Quebec voted to stay within the Federation of Canada. The Liberal Party, headed by Robert Bourassa, promised to solve its economic and health issues. We all felt that it would have been disastrous for Canada if Quebec had seceded from the Federation.

In early May I had to arrange a local funeral for a US citizen from South Bend, Indiana, who had committed suicide on a Halifax Beach. His mother asked me to take care of the arrangements in Halifax. Since he was a veteran we draped his coffin with the American flag. I accompanied the priest to the Catholic cemetery in lower Sackville.

On May 9, I went on board the State of Maine, an old Panamanian cruiser which had been sent by the Marine Academy of Castine, Maine. There were 400 cadets on board. It is customary when an American ship comes into port that a Consular official goes on board to the Captain's quarters to welcome him. This was my first such experience. I was saluted by the officers and the midshipmen. Lt. Bailey of the US Navy accompanied me to meet Captains Hill and Brennan in their cabins. After chatting a while they went with me to pay a formal call on Consul General Peaslee at the Consulate General in Halifax.

At an evening reception I learned that the US Merchant Marines' purpose is to train cadets and Reserve Officers for the US Navy, and also to promote US products overseas. There are four Merchant Marine Academies in the United States. The one in Castine, Maine, is sponsored by the federal and state governments. "One third of the expenditures are covered by the student tuition," the Commander stated. When we returned a formal call on the captains we could see some popular products of Maine displayed in the ship's main lounge, such as lobster and potatoes.



## Library of Congress

At the end of May, Roland Wolfe, Treasury Attach# at our Embassy in Ottawa, came to Halifax to assist US taxpayers with their income tax returns. Some post office strikes erupted in Windsor and in other parts of Canada which lasted several weeks and spread throughout the country. It was generally believed there was a need for wage increases in many industrial sectors of Canada.

The government of Canada also decided to let the Canadian dollar float freely on the international market. Before that time, the Canadian dollar was “pegged” with an agreement made with the International Monetary Fund (IMF). The Canadian government wanted to keep a line on inflation. To us it represented a substantial loss in salary. Exports into Canada would be cheaper. The reevaluation of the Canadian dollar affected tourism, and Canadian exports became more expensive.

My work increased in the summer because many people wanted to go to the United States for summer school and for pleasure.

In the middle of June, the Cuban Ambassador to Canada, Jose Fernandez de Cossio, was in Halifax, and Nova Scotia officials invited us to attend a dinner in his honor. However, we could not attend this Provincial event because we did not have diplomatic relations with Cuba.

The Cuban Ambassador met with Nova Scotia industry representatives and showed interest in buying steel rails from Sydney Steel, which would be used for Cuba's railways. He met with Trudeau and Industry Minister Gerald Ritcey.

On June 18 we attended a dinner by the government of Nova Scotia for Israeli Ambassador to Canada and Mrs. Ephraim Evron. It was a successful evening and several Jewish real estate investors in Nova Scotia attended. One of the guests was Dr. Goldbloom, a researcher with the Department of Defense. The Israeli Ambassador stated,

## Library of Congress

"I hope you will be able to see Israel someday and see what we have done with that small piece of land."

In the middle of June, the Trudeau government issued a white paper on foreign policy. It seemed to reflect that Canada's policies in foreign affairs would move away from its traditional international position, as advocated by former Foreign Minister Lester Pearson, to a more nationalistic, pragmatic approach.

My friend, Frank Barrett, wanted us to meet his mother and aunt. We visited St. Paul's Anglican Church, the Nova Scotia Legislature, and the Citadel. We also motored to Peggy's Cove.

On July 14 I drove to Moncton, New Brunswick, to attend the French National Day reception given by French Consul to Moncton and Halifax and Mrs. Michel Ribordy.

My French came in handy during my tour in Canada. There were many official events such as this one where it was useful to speak French with French Canadian officials and academic and cultural leaders.

At the French Consul's residence I met many Moncton and New Brunswick leaders: Leonard Jones, Mayor of Moncton; Deputy Cyr, Federal Senator; Thomas Rector Savoie, of the French University, in Moncton; and Judge Brian. I also spoke with the general manager of the French newspaper Evangeline. Although Moncton was about sixty percent English speaking there was intense French cultural activity at the University. But there existed no conflict between the two linguistic groups as in the Province of Quebec.

I also met several new US prisoners incarcerated at both Springhill and Dorchester prisons. At lunch with the assistant warden (director), at Dorchester, he told me that they had started a new system of a traveling parole board which was authorized to make on the spot decisions and to parole inmates without a formal review. This would improve our consular relations between Canada and the United States.

## Library of Congress

On August 1, 1970, I visited Fredericton, the capital of New Brunswick, and the Lord Beaverbrook Art Museum where Salvador Dali's "Santiago El Grande" dominates.

The following week I learned of the August 7 murder of US Aid official, Dan A. Mitrione, in Montevideo, Uruguay. It was a shameful act on the part of irresponsible terrorists. It put a damper on our Latin American policies.

In spite of the terrorist acts occurring in Latin America there were some positive signs on the horizon — in the bilateral agreement between President Diaz Ordaz of Mexico and President Nixon.

August 24, I met Ambassador of Japan to Canada, Shinichi Kondo, at a dinner in his honor by the Government of Nova Scotia. The Japanese Ambassador came to visit the Toyota car assembly plant in Sydney, Nova Scotia.

A similar dinner was given August 20, in honor of the Indonesian Ambassador to Canada, Darmo Bandoro. I met Dr. Morgan, President of Kings College in Halifax. Attorney General Donohue of Nova Scotia referred to the fact that Nova Scotia and Indonesia had many maritime interests in common.

### CHAPTER XII State Department Assignments Office of Press Relations Washington DC, 1970-1977

On September 5, 1970, I was reassigned to the Office of Press Relations of the State Department. This office was headed by veteran diplomat Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Press Relations Robert J. McCloskey (in 1976 he was nominated as Ambassador to the Netherlands), who had wide experience in dealing with the media and official Washington. I served as number two in a three man unit, responsible for monitoring domestic radio/TV broadcasts and transcribing newscasts, interviews, and commentary on the State Department and international affairs of significance, for submission as a daily report to the Secretary of State. I worked for Katherine Marshall, Deputy Director;

## Library of Congress

John F. King, Deputy Director of Press Relations; and Simone Poulain, who had been an assistant to Mrs. Lyndon Johnson. Anything that affected foreign affairs and the US government would be typed up and urgent foreign policy news items, such as Marvin and Bernard Kalb's (CBS) coverage of diplomatic events, James Anderson's news reports (Westinghouse Broadcasting), and Roger Mudd's (CBS) and Richard Valeriani's (NBC) reports, would be rushed to Secretary McCloskey's office and then to the Secretariat for political analysis. This job allowed me to meet many news and TV reporters who attended the daily news briefings at the State Department. I also worked under Charles W. Bray, III.

Working for the State Department Office of Press Relations gave me a perspective of the importance of coverage of US foreign policy items in the nation's media. More importantly, how the Secretary of State's office was receptive to the media's coverage of diplomatic developments.

In the early 1970s the Vietnam war was in the evening news every night. The Nixon breakthrough with Communist China in February, 1972, and the Kissinger secret meetings with Zhou En-lai, leading up to the Nixon summit with the Chinese Prime Minister, were news items that were screened thoroughly by the press relations office where I worked. Some sensitive news, such as that of a Soviet seaman who jumped ship in the early 1970s, and similar cold war events, were brought to the Secretary of State's attention. President Nixon's diplomatic overtures with the Soviet Union, China, and the Middle East made this an interesting time.

### Transpo '72

In the fall of 1971 I was detailed as foreign service officer to the Department of Transportation to become a State Department liaison officer at the International Transport Exposition (Transpo 1972), held May 27 through June 4, 1972, at Dulles International Airport. I was told that this would be no easy task. Since I would be responsible for coordinating all diplomatic representatives to the Exposition. The months preceding this

## Library of Congress

international event, I had an office in the Department of Transportation and was in contact with major embassies in Washington that planned to send delegates to Transpo '72. The Exposition promoted methods of rapid transportation, and countries such as the Soviet Union, France, Germany, Japan, and Italy sent their technical teams.

I worked directly for Colonel Bernard A. Ramundo, Special Assistant to the Secretary of Transportation John Volpe. Colonel Ramundo was the Exposition's Director of Visiting Dignitaries division. Mrs. Diane Cook, Executive Director of the International Visitors Center (IVIS) was part of this public relations team. The State Department interfaced with the Department of Transportation's International Secretariat on special substantive discussions between visiting ministers of transport and communications and the Secretary of Transportation John Volpe. I was instrumental in arranging meetings between visiting Soviet ministers of civil aeronautics and Henry Ford Jr., President of the Ford Motor Company.

Many of the official government delegations arrived beforehand and were lodged in Washington. I spent about eight days in the Dulles International Airport VIP lounge, where most government officials and foreign delegates met.

I acted as a liaison between the Soviet ministers and Mr. Ford. I was impressed with Mr. Ford's knowledge of trade between the USSR and the United States. His knowledge of the Soviet Union dated back to his father's former business ventures in Russia in the early 1920s.

One of the highlights of my assignment at Transpo was my personal contact with then Ambassador George Bush. He was, in 1972, the US Ambassador to the United Nations. I arranged details of his visit and that of the U.N. delegation, comprised of 65 ambassadors from various countries, which he hosted. One afternoon he flew in with the U.N. delegation to show them Transpo '72. I met his plane at Dulles. He said I was "doing a good job coordinating the diplomatic teams." He was particularly pleased that everything went off

## Library of Congress

without problems. He introduced me to the Chiefs of Missions at the U.N. At the exhibit many countries were represented, including France, Japan, Germany, and Italy. I also met Mrs. George Shultz, whose husband was President Nixon's Chief of the Budget and later President Reagan's Secretary of State.

### Cultural Exchanges-Latin America

My responsibilities at Transpo '72 led to an interesting onward assignment. The State Department assigned me to the Bureau of Inter-American Programs as Cultural Affairs Program Officer for Central America and South America, and the Caribbean (CU/ARA). My job came under the International Program for Educational and Cultural Exchange of the US State Department. This program was authorized in 1946 by the Fulbright Act, and was later enlarged by the Smith-Mundt Act of 1948. The Mutual Educational and Cultural Exchange Act of 1961, known as the Fulbright Hays Act, consolidated previous legislation governing the program. The program is paid for by the US government. In 1971, for example, CU (cultural affairs area) expenditures totaled \$4.6 million. The Fulbright program also sent American professors and persons of exceptional achievement in their field, to foreign countries, to teach in their fields of expertise.

My responsibility was to coordinate international visitors programs for several Latin American countries. We selected leaders of Latin America (grantees) who excelled in business, labor, culture, academia, and government, to visit the United States.

Many of my grantees were of ministerial or sub-cabinet rank. In August of 1972 I expected General Peralta of Guatemala for a 30-day visit. General Peralta was the director of the military academy of Guatemala. John Ferraro, a contract employee, served as his escort interpreter. As guest of the US government, all details for his arrival and program were arranged between a contracting agency, such as Government Affairs Institute (GAI), and cultural exchange program officers, such as myself. I worked on a similar visit for Mrs. Trujillo, sister of the President of Panama. She was a cultural leader at the University of

## Library of Congress

Panama and her special interest in the United States was to see what we were doing in the ghettos and urban areas.

On August 14, 1972, Director Stephen Comiskey introduced me to Assistant Secretary John Richardson and Deputy Under Secretary Frederick Irving (who later was nominated as Ambassador to Iceland), of the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs. Steve and I often met with Under Secretary Richardson because our bureau was responsible for preparing briefing papers on cultural programs of the countries to which our ambassadors were assigned. At this time we saw Ambassador designate to Costa Rica Viron P. Vaky. We had prepared a briefing paper for him on our Cultural Affairs Program in Costa Rica. Ambassador Vaky was one of those envoys who took special interest in cultural exchanges.

August 30, I attended a dinner in the Embassy Hall of the Dupont Plaza Hotel hosted by the Council of International Programs (CIP), a contract agency for youth leaders and social workers. The grantees spent four months studying social programs in the United States. Both US Assistant Secretary of State John Richardson and Congressman Walter E. Fountroy, member of Congress from District of Columbia, were speakers. I was sitting next to Miss Irene Dick, a social worker from Cura#ao, with whom I spoke in Dutch. She had devoted herself to combating juvenile delinquency.

September 8, I sat in on a secret State Department meeting on Cuba. The focus was on our future relations with that country. The meeting was sponsored by the President's Advisory Board, consisting of private citizens who advise the President on cultural affairs exchanges with other countries. Robert A. Hurwitch, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State who was Cuban Desk Officer at the time of the Cuban Bay of Pigs fiasco, was present. These conversations were classified.

From Orlando Lozano Martinez, a deputy of the National Congress in Honduras, I learned that the government of Honduras was appreciative of the US-Honduras agreement to

## Library of Congress

return the United States territory of Swan Island, in the Caribbean, to Honduras. This island has facilities to detect hurricanes. He said, "ROCAP (the Common Market workings in Central America), are not smooth going due to the fact that there exists an economic disequilibrium between Guatemala and Honduras.

Edgardo Sevilla Idiaquez, Minister of Natural Resources of Honduras, was in the United States to attend the second World Conference on National Parks at Yellowstone and Grand Teton National Parks. After a fifteen minutes talk with Minister Sevilla, I gave him a short tour of the State Department's historic first floor. He commented that he had held various assignments at the national university and that someday he wanted to be Minister of Education.

I had a program briefing in Leslie Polk's office at GAI for Grantee Martin Baide from Honduras. Martin was a reporter for the daily paper, El Cronista, the second most influential newspaper, which, at that time, had a circulation of about 20,000. He requested to attend a State Department press briefing which I arranged.

I received Mrs. Alba Alonso de Quesada, Chief of the Educational Reform Commission of Education in Honduras. She was Minister of Labor (1962-64) and Vice Minister of Education. Mrs. Quesada was interested in discussing educational problems in Honduras. She said, "Preparation is too oriented toward the arts and humanities as a result of philosophical influences from Chile and Venezuela." She added, "Honduras students need more practical training, especially in areas such as agriculture, if the country is to avoid economic and social chaos."

The same day I talked about similar problems with the visiting mayor of Cali, Colombia. Carlos Holquin Sardi had been mayor of Cali since 1970. Cali had a million inhabitants and was an industrialized city, with sugar and paper factories. He pointed out that urbanization programs in Colombia needed priority. During his visit in the United States, I arranged meetings for him with leaders of the World Bank on loans for urban programs. He also



## Library of Congress

tried to obtain technical help to aid Colombian technological institutes in training students in the crowded cities, such as Cali. "This would help students to find jobs in industry," he added.

September 15, I attended the swearing in ceremony of Mr. Frederick Irving as Ambassador to Iceland. He was formerly the Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Cultural Affairs. The ceremony took place in the elegant Jefferson Room. The Minister of Iceland was also present.

President Nixon came to the State Department to speak to 53 attach#s dealing in drug trafficking matters overseas. He warned nations receiving US aid that "any shelter given to narcotic traffic dealers would cause aid to be suspended under existing US statutes." As all this was going on Senator George McGovern was preparing his presidential campaign.

At this time I briefed Alvaro Bermudez Castillo and Carlos Lopez Mena, both grantees from Nicaragua. They were in their fifth year of law school at the Central American University in Managua, Nicaragua. They admitted that the Somoza family had maintained tight political control for over 40 years, but that they had brought some political stability to Nicaragua. I also met with Ann Sigmund, our Cultural Affairs Officer (CAO) in USIS in Managua. She said that many of Nicaragua's elite had been educated in US schools and that now was the time for our cultural affairs bureau to identify economically less privileged students for educational travel to the United States. I kept her advice in mind during my tenure in CU/ARA.

I had another visitor from Nicaragua, Adolfo Calero Portocarrero, Dean of the Faculty of Economics and Business Administration at Central University in Managua. And, a couple of days later, Abdul Karim, Chairman of the Department of Engineering at the National University. Both grantees obtained graduate degrees in the United States and were well versed in American affairs. I learned that cotton production in Nicaragua was

## Library of Congress

highly mechanized, but that serious drought problems caused them to import grains and agricultural products.

On October 16, Mr. Benjamin, Mayor of Linden, Guyana, came to my office. The country became independent in 1966 but had strong cultural ties with Great Britain. Guyana had been pursuing a leading role in the non-aligned group of nations. He told me that in spite of twelve percent unemployment, his country had made strides through agricultural co-operatives. He stated that the poor receive a plot of land to work on. If they work twenty hours a week they eventually get a house to live in and weekly food parcels. Linden then had a population of 30,000 and sold bauxite to US and Canadian aluminum processing companies.

Grantee Hubert Williams, sub-editor of the Sunday Graphic, in Georgetown, Guyana, told me that he was concerned that countries like Guyana could lose out economically because of decisions made by major powers. He pointed out that at the Stockholm conference on environmental problems small countries were asked to fight pollution. "We would prefer a little pollution and more industrial development," he said.

I met with Danilo Arias, a reporter with La Nacion, a leading Costa Rican daily. His primary interest was to observe the George McGovern and Richard Nixon political campaigns. Prior to his arrival he had interviewed strongman General Omar Torrijos of Panama. We talked about Costa Rica's economic problems. He said that Oscar Arias, President Jos# Figueres' economic planning board expert, was interested in the work of American economist Robert Griffin, of Yale, and that he remained optimistic about the stability of the political and economic base of Costa Rica.

There was momentum in the American press about a successful outcome of peace negotiations and efforts to end the conflict in Vietnam.

There was constant program activity in my office and a stream of official visitors. Each one had an important message to convey which made it easier for political and cultural experts

## Library of Congress

in the Bureau to appraise the underlying dilemmas of each country. Our cultural programs sometimes overlapped the political arena.

Grantee Ramon Alfonso Moreno, President of the Social Christian party in the Dominican Republic, told me about his exile during the dictatorship of Rafael Trujillo. Dr. Moreno believed that the Joaquin Balaguer government held tight a reign of power, but that his country had severe agricultural shortages. US intervention in his country during the Johnson years was not popular, he said.

I also welcomed Rodrigo Mineiro, Chief of the “O Globo” branch in Belo Horizonte, Minas Gerais, Brazil. He believed that the government of Brazil wanted to spread literacy. He said, “This will improve the intellectual level of the people, but not always their economic lot. A shoeshine boy may be able to read, but he will still remain a shoeshine boy.”

He believed that the Medici government was moving more to the right, and said, “The US image has improved in Brazil in the absence of an outspoken leftist flank.” Mineiro indicated that some of Brazil's neighbors, like Uruguay and Paraguay, actually feared the new Brazilian “giant” as Latin America once feared the US giant to the north.

There is no doubt in my mind that Brazil has a leading role to play in the hemisphere because of its size, untapped wealth, and its talented people. I also learned that Brazil is the least racist country in the world, an advantage in the multi-cultural panorama.

On November 21, Colonel Mauro Costa Rodrigues, Secretary of Education for the State of Rio Grande do Sul, Brazil, was in my office. He said that his government was sending professors from his state university to the inner regions of the Amazon in the northeast to teach and bring higher education to the people. He was fluent in Spanish because he was from the border area near Uruguay. He was especially interested in rural school programs and audio visual equipment.

## Library of Congress

Our bureau allocated sizable funds for the Brazilian student leaders program, given the geographic importance of Brazil. I thought these were dollars well spent. I talked with Professor Hulet of the Portuguese and Spanish department at the University of California at Los Angeles (UCLA). Our office had a \$50,000 contract with UCLA for a seminar to teach fifteen Brazilian leaders.

President Nixon's reelection provided continuity in foreign policy initiatives with respect to the Soviet Union, China, and the Middle East, making our work in the foreign service easier.

On November 8 I received Cesar Rodriguez, Vice Minister of Justice of Panama. He was a dynamic leader of the new Torrijos regime. He assured me that Panama had changed a lot since I was there in the early 1960s. "Panama," he said, "wants sovereignty in the Canal Zone and more benefits from the canal operation." A few days after he was on board as a grantee, the Panamanian Embassy in Washington called us about a problem with Mr. Rodriguez' suitcase. It did not arrive in his hotel until later and Rodriguez stated that someone had tampered with it. I went with Mr. John Blacken, Political Desk officer for Panama, to Mr. Rodriguez' hotel, and explained to him that the US government was in no way connected with the tampering of his suitcase. Although he threatened to leave the country, we were able to dissuade him from doing so. He continued his program in community development and intermunicipal contacts, and we were able to avoid a serious diplomatic incident that would have adversely affected US-Panamanian relations.

Director Comiskey asked me to attend an important meeting, November 28, in Ambassador Jova's office. Ambassador Joseph John Jova was our delegate to the Organization of American States (OAS) in Washington. The meeting was called to prepare a position paper for the Inter American Council for Education, Science and Culture (CIECC), one of the three most important bodies of the Organization of American States (OAS). Many offices of the State Department were represented. It was chaired by Mr.

## Library of Congress

Kockler, of the Office of the US Mission to the OAS. Bernard Femminella, former US Consul in Colon, Panama during the time I served there, also participated.

The first item of discussion was the accreditation of delegates to the Mar del Plata meeting in December. The Office of International Organizations in the State Department was responsible for handling all international conferences, and our office coordinated programs with them. The second item on the agenda was the position paper which my office (CU/ARA) was responsible for producing at the Argentina meeting. The paper would include Identification, Protection and Vigilance of Archeological, Historic and Artistic Patrimony. In connection with archeological works of art our office was also involved in setting up a seminar in Albuquerque, New Mexico, on the preservation of sacred art in the Americas. Charles W. Collier, a Latin American specialist, stressed the importance of preserving church statues of historic value.

The next day I attended a meeting in the office of Arthur Allen, director of the Near East Cultural Affairs Bureau (CU/NEA). Ambassador John A. Gronouski, former Ambassador to Poland and Postmaster General under President Kennedy, was there. He was then Dean of the Lyndon B. Johnson School of Public Affairs at the University of Texas in Austin. "The Johnson School," he stated, "is identifying inter academic graduates to become leaders in public affairs." He suggested that, for the Latin America area, our bi-national commissions could help choose qualified applicants.

November 14, I briefed four Guatemalan students in my office who were on educational travel grants. They studied at San Carlos University in Guatemala.

I also met Dr. Luis M. Rodriguez Morales, Director of National Archives of Puerto Rico, who had just come back from an International Archives meeting in Paris. He opined that the United States, Argentina, and Spain are ahead of other countries in this field.

In December, I was privileged to attend a meeting of the Board of Foreign Scholarships. This Board was created by Congress in 1946 and is responsible for the selection of CU/

## Library of Congress

ARA's academic grantees and for supervision of our office's academic programs. I talked with Mr. Nelson, one of twelve Board members. He had just come back from Latin America where he found a warm response in both Chile and Colombia. Although there was high pressure from the Marxist Salvador Allende administration to suppress American cultural programs, Catholic University TV Channel 13, in Chile, received much support for its communications program. Colombia prided itself that it was the only country in Latin America participating in the budget for cultural exchanges with the United States. We learned that Peru and Brazil were also receptive to AID assistance for schools.

I was surprised to learn that the cultural academic program in Argentina was very weak, that Argentinean academicians were suspicious of our cultural programs as being politically motivated. Brazil, on the other hand, because it had received support from a well organized Fulbright Commission, developed a successful academic program.

On November 17, 1972, Secretary of State William Rogers delivered an address to the OAS to commemorate the 150th anniversary of diplomatic relations between the US and Latin America. In fact, it was in 1822 that President James Monroe accepted Manuel Torres' credentials as Charg# d'Affaires of Gran Columbia.

### Earthquake in Nicaragua

Around Christmas, 1972, Nicaragua was hit by one of the worst earthquakes in its history. The State Department set up a Nicaraguan task force to evacuate Americans and to help the devastated country. Telephone communications were difficult. I tried to get in touch with Ann Sigmund, our Cultural Affairs officer in Managua. Ann explained to me that, in spite of the wide devastation of buildings and homes, the University of Nicaragua buildings remained intact and final exams would take place as scheduled. She pointed out, however, that food and shelter for thousands of the suffering and wounded were the priority. It was clear to me that the reconstruction of Nicaragua would be a colossal task. I had some doubts about Ann's optimism. The Nicaraguan recovery mission required

## Library of Congress

constant follow up and coordination with officers in the State Department, the Agency of International Development (AID), the Embassy of Nicaragua, and the Department of Commerce.

I received many calls from the United States inquiring about the tragedy. I was able to talk with two of our Fulbright professors who were teaching linguistics at the University of Nicaragua, and I learned that both Dr. Richter and Dr. Hackenberg had been safely evacuated.

As all this was taking place I talked with Bishop Perez of Jalles, Brazil. Jalles is an agricultural region 250 miles from Sao Paulo. On this grant tour he was interested in church problems in similar agricultural regions, such as Iowa and Wisconsin.

On January 8, 1973, I was involved in the itinerary of eight engineering students from El Salvador. They wanted to visit the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) and the University of Pittsburgh. It was difficult to get them in to see a steel mill in Pittsburgh because of security reasons, but I arranged a visit to Morgantown, West Virginia, where the Department of Transportation and the Boeing Aircraft Company were developing a monorail similar to the ones seen at Transpo '72. One of their pet projects, however, was to visit the desalinization plants in California. Water shortage was an acute problem in El Salvador.

As I progressed in my cultural affairs job, I realized that my assignment in the Department enabled me to understand how Washington policies are carried out in the field. It was essential to have good rapport between the State Department's bureaus and the foreign service posts.

On January 10 I sat in on a meeting in the office of Alan Reich, Deputy Assistant Secretary of CU/ARA. He had invited coaches and team leaders of the soccer team of Quincy College to hold a debriefing on their trip to El Salvador, Guatemala, and Panama. It was believed that more interest should be given to soccer in the United States in order to

## Library of Congress

improve warm ties with Latin America, where soccer is a very popular sport. I found out that Quincy College in Illinois contacted the People's Republic of China for an exchange of soccer teams.

Many policy making officers in the State Department felt that the war in Vietnam had been an irritant in improving diplomatic impasses in other areas of the world. Since a solution in Vietnam was finally in sight many foreign service officers involved in policy were renewing contacts with both Arabs and Israelis to end the deadlock in the Middle East region. One of Secretary William Rogers' goals was to reopen the Suez Canal, which had been closed since the Six Day War in 1967. He conferred on a regular basis with King Hussein of Jordan and Prime Minister Golda Meir of Israel. Prime Minister Meir was a regular visitor to Washington. She used to wave her shopping bag to the Press to indicate that she needed more financial help from the United States. I saw her on one of these trips in the Department on February 28, 1973, when she was welcomed by Under Secretary Kenneth Rush and Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern Affairs, Joe Sisco. Both Prime Minister Golda Meir and Secretary Sisco were ardent advocates of peace in the Middle East.

On January 30, 1973, I attended an address by historian Barbara Tuchman on China, sponsored by the American Foreign Service Association. This was a tribute to "old China hands" of the State Department like John Stewart Service, who had been dismissed in the 1950s and 1970s for making objective reports on China.

Mrs. Tuchman presented a comprehensive report of American policy, from President Wilson through Richard Nixon. She said, "We have been activists, and with our superior air power, have tried to solve problems on the ground and were not able to do it as in Indochina." John Service also spoke about the need for objective political reporting by FSOs in the field.



## Library of Congress

February 9, I attended a White House welcoming ceremony for Prime Minister Edward Heath of Great Britain. The talks stressed post-war Vietnam and a new relationship with Europe in view of Britain's entry into the Common Market.

On the weekends I often went with Rebecca and Ma## to the Sunday concerts at Constitution Hall. We were fortunate to see artists such as Aaron Copeland and Jerry Lewis.

March 6, I saw President Nixon and Secretary of State William Rogers in the diplomatic entrance of the State Department. They delivered eulogies in honor of slain US diplomats Ambassador Cleo Noel, Jr. and Deputy Chief of Mission George Curtis Moore, who were killed in the Sudan. This was the President's first visit to the State Department since becoming president. He took advantage of the opportunity to make a firm stand against international terrorism.

At the Department of Commerce I welcomed a group of seven Nicaraguan businessmen who had been selected to reestablish contacts in the public and private sector in the US, and thereby help with the recovery of their country. Deputy Assistant Secretary Richard K. Fox, Jr., the US Ambassador to Trinidad and Tobago (1977-1979), hosted a luncheon for them in the Williamsburg Room of the Watergate Hotel, which I also attended. In the evening we were all invited by Ambassador Guillermo Sevilla Sacasa for a reception. He had been the Dean of the Diplomatic Corps for over thirty years. We were warmly received at the Nicaraguan Embassy.

On April 10 Ambassador of Honduras and Mrs. Barnes were our hosts at a reception at the Embassy of Honduras in honor of Honduran Foreign Minister Cesar Batres. The foreign ministers of Latin America were in Washington for an OAS meeting. The United States was being put on the defensive by the OAS because US trade policies were not liberal enough vis a vis importation of Latin American products into the US. In talks with political and cultural leaders from Latin America the issues of trade and Panama Canal

## Library of Congress

sovereignty were discussed. I also briefed our own Ambassador to Honduras, Philly-Sanchez, giving him some details of our cultural programs.

April 19, we motored to Airlie House, near Warrenton, Virginia to attend a State Department conference of cultural affairs officers serving in Latin American posts. The site, set at the foot of the Blue Ridge mountains, provided serenity conducive for such a meeting. We discussed the Einaudi report (named after Luigi Einaudi, who worked in the Policy Planning Office for Latin American Affairs in the 1970s, and as Ambassador to the OAS in 1989) that examined future planning for academic and international visitors.

I also received Carlos Garey, a noted painter from Honduras, who was interested in the Western paintings of Russell and Remington, which were on display in the diplomatic reception rooms. Gabriela Candenado, Assistant Director of Culture in Panama, who worked with Panamanian painter Jaime Ingram, also came on an international visitor's tour.

Roger Miranda, International Editor of La Prensa, the most widely read paper in Nicaragua came to see me. He said that US government support for Anastasio Somoza and other military dictatorships in Latin America would stifle democracy in his country.

Some of our grantees expressed concern over the Watergate affair. They believed that the integrity of the presidency was involved. Others said that it may be a positive thing for the US government to put its house in order, and could serve the democratic process in the long run.

On May 2, Costa Rican President Jos# Figueres canceled a visit to the Department to attend a reception for the President's Committee for the Handicapped. Some believed that the Robert Vesco scandal and Watergate had caused the cancellation.

Later that month I briefed Panama's Prosecutor for Narcotics, Carlos Sandoval. He came to meet Mr. Wagner, a specialist in that field. "Panama has always been an ideal transit

## Library of Congress

place for smuggling narcotics, but does a lot to combat it," he said. He wanted the Canal Zone to do more to inspect the shipments of vessels through the Canal.

Besides Leonidas Escobar, Assistant Director of the Panamanian daily, La Estrella, we had a visit by American economist Paul Samuelson, following his Lincoln lecture tour in the Pacific. He felt that Japan should play a more dynamic role in the economic development of Asia.

During a few days spent in Belgium, I had a private visit with the governor of the Province of West Flanders, Pierre Van Outryve d'Ydewalle. Many aspects of my visit must remain confidential, but the substance of our talk centered on the future of Europe and the Atlantic Alliance. He stated that Belgium was a buffer state between the super-powers of Europe. He saw Belgium, because of its size, "in need of breathing space." He alluded to Belgian policy, as always, pro-English and pro-American. Since I also talked about my cultural affairs work, he referred to Bruges' painter Luc Peire and his exhibit in New York.

On July 5, 1973, I was received at the Bruges City Hall by Mayor Michel Van Maele. He was an outgoing politician and an excellent city manager. Van Maele was responsible for many of the architectural conservation projects in the city. He told me that he wanted to visit Williamsburg, Virginia, to see firsthand how an old colonial city has been preserved.

On July 22, I returned to Washington via Barcelona. The cultural exchange program continued at a rapid pace. The following week I saw Leticia Perez, a representative of Santiago de Veraguas, in Panama's National Assembly. She spoke with enthusiasm about General Omar Torrijos, who came from humble origins.

On August 20, Henry Kissinger was nominated as Secretary of State, replacing William Rogers. As a member of the National Security Council staff he helped shape Nixon's foreign policies: détente with Russia, renewed contacts with mainland China, and disengagement in Indochina.

## Library of Congress

In early September, President Nixon addressed the problems in the Middle East and the oil crisis. From time to time I was in contact with our newly-appointed Ambassador to Saudi Arabia, James Atkins. Dr. Matheus, of Venezuela, wanted to meet with Ambassador Atkins on oil policy matters. In my office we accommodated meetings of this sort.

On September 5, Fernando Sanz, President of the Metalurgical Federacion of Colombia, came to see me about a visit to the US Steel plant in Pittsburgh. He was interested in all phases of steel manufacturing and told me that trade relations between Colombia and Venezuela were on a positive footing, and that this phenomenon could lead to an enlarged Latin American free trade market.

### Coup in Chile

On September 11, 1973, a military coup, headed by General Augusto Pinochet, took place in Santiago, Chile. The Chilean (junta) military forces shot President Salvador Allende. My Grantees from Chile, Palacios and Concha, who were connected with a radio station, said they felt that President Allende had gone too far. Economic chaos was prevalent in Chile for six months, and there were severe food shortages. Roman Alegria Rodriguez, an influential Chilean newspaperman from La Prensa, who was once the Head of Press in the Cultural Division of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs under Christian Democrat President Eduardo Montalva Frei, felt that capitalism, as practiced in Chile was a "savage experiment, reminiscent of the early industrial revolution." I was glad that our cultural exchanges with Chile would continue in spite of the military coup by General Pinochet.

In subsequent weeks, I met Under Secretary of the Interior of Chile, Marx Enrique Montero. I accompanied him to Ambassador Lewis Hoffacker's office, who gave him a briefing on terrorism. Ambassador Sheldon Vance also briefed him on the war on drugs and prevention of international drug traffic. This was the beginning of the briefings on drugs for our international visitors. At the National Institute of Drug Abuse there were some

## Library of Congress

differences of opinion on how to prevent drug use and trafficking, but the emphasis in the early 1970s was on enforcement.

On June 11, 1974, I met Julio Robert Canessa, executive secretary of Chile's Junta Advisory Council and chairman of the Council on Administrative Reform, and with General Carrasco, of the military liaison office. We also had a few leading grantees who worked at the Catholic University in Santiago.

Chile, under the Pinochet junta, made concessions to foreign companies who were nationalized under Salvador Allende. At a reception at Fort McNair Officers' Club by Commandant Bayne of the National War College for Ecuadorian visitors, were other officials, including: Colonel Tanake, of the Pentagon; Major Fleming with NATO, and Leslie Palmer, former military aide to Vice President Spiro Agnew.

Because of the political crisis in Chile, it was State Department policy to include many Grantees from Chile, especially Christian Democrat candidates with political, economic and communications leadership potential. Some of these promising Chileans were: Gustavo Lorca Rojas, Professor of Roman and Commercial Law at the University of Chile; Thomas Machale Espinosa, News Editor of El Mercurio, in Santiago; Raul Troncoso Castillo, National Counselor of the Christian Democratic Party in Chile; and Claudio Orrego Vicuna, Director of the Institute of Political Studies. (The Mercurio is one of the leading Latin American dailies.)

At the same time Dr. Jesus Valarino Morales, Secretary General of the Central University in Caracas, paid me a visit and spoke of the need for educational reform. August 29, I spoke with Alexis Matheus, head of Cordiplan, an economic advisory agency reporting to the President of Venezuela. It was the counterpart of our Energy Department. When I asked him what he thought of the energy crisis, he replied that there was enough oil for one hundred years. "The problem is one of mismanagement, improper planning, and distribution," he said. When I discussed these issues with Ivan Bejarano and Carlos

## Library of Congress

Morillo, officials of the Ecuadorian Petroleum Agency (CEPE), they said they felt that Ecuador's oil resources would benefit adequate oil distribution.

The next week we witnessed the breakout of a new war between Israel, Syria, and Egypt. Everyone began to realize how important it was to have stability in the Middle East. In 1973 the United States imported about ten percent of its oil from the Middle East. The Nixon administration took advantage of the October Middle East war to urge everyone to conserve energy.

October 11, I attended a conference hosted by the State Department for the Peruvian War College. One keynote speaker, Jean Spencer, of the National Security Council (NSC), outlined the role of the NSC staff under Presidents Nixon, Johnson, Eisenhower, and Kennedy. He pointed out that Nixon and Eisenhower used the NSC on a regular basis, whereas Presidents Johnson and Kennedy preferred smaller and private staffs to handle international and diplomatic crises.

At the end of October, General Leopold Mantilla, Director of the Instituto de Altos Estudios (equivalent to our US War College), came to my office. He said that his school prepares civilians and military personnel for leadership posts in Ecuador. Many Latin American countries in the early 1970s were ruled by generals. We could not ignore their positions of power.

In November I met with Ignacio Aguilar, manager of the National Association of Industrialists of Colombia (ANDI), and Raoul E. Chavarria, Associate Editor of *El Occidente*, of Cali, Colombia. I also saw Gordon Jones at a party given by FSO James Tull for Dr. and Mrs. Jorge Stanham, of Montevideo.

I had an opportunity to observe the operations of the American Institute for Free Labor Development (AIFLD), and was impressed with how well they prepared the Latin American grantees to improve their communications with labor leaders.

## Library of Congress

January 3, 1974, Roberto Muñoz, from the National Bank in Uruguay, came to express his appreciation for the well organized leaders' tour of the United States. The same week I spoke with Rodrigo Isaza, President of the National Radio chain, and Eucario Bermudez, National Director of the Caracol Broadcasting System of Bogota. During their debriefing I learned that Colombia did not have color TV because of the high cost.

### Shuttle Diplomacy

In early 1974 there were two issues that took the front seat at the State Department: There was an agreement in principle between Panama and the United States to reopen substantive negotiations on the Panama Canal Zone; and Secretary of State Henry Kissinger was constantly traveling to the Middle East to mediate talks between Egypt and Israel. He deserved the title of peripatetic Secretary of State because he flew from country to country, working on the plane in search of peace. It was a period referred to as "Shuttle Diplomacy." Kissinger was largely responsible for disengaging troops between Israel and Egypt.

On February 4, I was present as Secretary Kissinger and Soviet Foreign Minister Andrei Gromyko were interviewed by the press in the main lobby of the State Department. They referred to their completed talks as a follow up on the Panamanian issues and a possible thaw in US-Cuban relations. Secretary Kissinger and Panamanian Foreign Minister Juan Tack signed a statement of principles. I had previously met Foreign Minister Tack when he was a teacher of Panamanian History at the University of Panama, in the early 1960s.

I attended a graduation ceremony at the American Institute for the development of free trade unions. They focused on the role of trade unions in the Andean Pact countries and advanced collective bargaining in Latin America and the United States. The actual ceremony was held at the International Association of Machinists. I met several Bolivian leaders and Sydney Smith, press attach# at the Guyanan Embassy in Washington.

## Library of Congress

While President Nixon continued to have problems with the House Judiciary Committee on Watergate, Secretary Kissinger “held his own” in discussing issues with foreign ministers of Latin America in Mexico City.

February 27, I went to the Secretary's Open Forum. Dr. Fred Bergsten, Senior Fellow at the Brookings Institution, spoke about resources and diplomacy. He did not feel that the Arabs placed the embargo on oil because of their anti-Israeli stance, but believed they wanted to benefit financially from lower production. The speaker encouraged US diplomats to put the issue of Cartelization on the upcoming international trade agenda.

On March 31, our daughter Rebecca received her first communion in the Church of the Queen of Apostles in Alexandria, Virginia. She looked beautiful in her white dress and veil. Afterward we went to the Dahlgren Chapel at Georgetown University, and then on to Annapolis.

In early April, I scheduled Raoul de la Torre, a leading Argentinean film producer, to meet with our staff and other government officials. Oscar Victor Rachetti Masanes, Mayor and Governor of Montevideo, Uruguay, was also our guest. He was a strong political force in Uruguay, and came to the Department to meet Ambassador William G. Bowdler, acting Assistant Secretary of State for Latin American affairs.

On May 13, George Lister, special assistant to Assistant Secretary for Latin American Affairs Jack Kubisch (1973-1974), gave a speech for visiting Christian Democrat youth leaders from Chile. He spoke about US policies towards Latin America. He said that the US has two objectives: “to protect the security of the United States and to make a safer and more prosperous Latin America.”

June 14, I arrived with Rebecca in Brussels. The bad news was that my father had suffered a serious stroke the day before. He was in St. John's Hospital emergency room, in Bruges, and was unable to communicate with us. He never recuperated from this attack.



## Library of Congress

I returned to the United States a week later with a stopover in Dublin. My mother remained serene throughout the two years that followed my father's crisis. My father could never return home. He was being taken care of in a nursing facility in Bruges. Although he was able to recognize us, he never regained his normal mental faculties to manage his own life. Fortunately, I was with him when he passed away on July 7, 1976, while I was visiting him and my mother.

August 8, 1974, President Richard Nixon submitted his resignation to the nation. This ended the long Watergate debacle. For the nation it was the end of a long nightmare. Only history will tell whether the President had to be sacrificed for it. The end of the Nixon years also ended a brilliant period in American diplomatic history.

On August 9, we watched the swearing in of Gerald R. Ford as the 30th president of the United States.

President Ford's first international crisis was the Turkish invasion of Cyprus. Stability in the Mediterranean was essential for peace in Europe and the Middle East. In the bureau of Political and Cultural Affairs for Latin America, we felt secure with Nelson Rockefeller as Vice President. He had wide experience in Latin American affairs.

At an Open Forum session, August 28, I attended Pat Holt's talk on Cuba. He was Secretary General of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and had just returned from a visit with Fidel Castro. He came back with changed impressions and said, "There is a limited market in Cuba for US products. A gentle normalization of relations with Cuba, by dropping the economic embargo, would make us look better in the eyes of the OAS and the Third World."

On Saturday mornings, I took a class with Fred McCoy on macroeconomics at George Washington University. My assignments in Washington made it possible for me to finish

## Library of Congress

my master's degree in history at George Mason University, in Fairfax, Virginia. During this post graduate period I focused on the Cold War and Latin American history.

Many of my visitors were interested in seeing the newly decorated Jefferson Room on the eighth floor in the State Department as well as George Catlin's paintings of American Indians (1780-1820). When Carlos Villasis, Director of Museums and Casa de la Cultura in Ecuador, came to visit me he spoke of a need to develop museums in his country.

October 9, Helmut Sonnenfeldt, Counselor of the Department, spoke to us on US-Soviet relations. He stated, "The portents for d#tente with the Soviet Union are not favorable because of our involvement in Vietnam and because of the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia." He also said that we should not delude ourselves into thinking that the USSR will become a third rate power.

During the week of October 24 I had two interesting visits from grantees. Senator Balcazar, from the Department of del Valle in Colombia, discussed the importance of sugar production in Del Valle Province, and how important it was to the Colombian economy. He felt that the level of food production in the world was too low to meet the increasing demand for food. Mr. Edmundo Narancio, Minister of Education and Culture of Uruguay, spoke to us about the educational reforms going on in Uruguay. Mr. Nesto J. Minutti, governor of the Department of Salto, Uruguay, and I had a long talk at the State Department, where he presented me with a beautiful statue of a "Gaicho" (a cowboy of the South American pampas, usually of Spanish and Indian descent; a herdsman in a distinctive costume) as a memento of his visit.

At a lunch at Mount Vernon College in Washington, President Peter Pelham told me that Venezuela was using some of its oil revenues to send Venezuelan students to the United States and abroad. I was impressed at how much of the government budgets in Latin America were spent on education.

## Library of Congress

November 12, we received a Venezuelan economic study group on a study grant. I arranged a briefing for them by our senior political and economic officers in the Department. At this briefing, it was pointed out at that oil producing countries, such as Saudi Arabia and Venezuela, had increased the costs of oil too rapidly over the previous fifteen months, significantly contributing to inflation. Experts on energy matters commented that oil bills in 1974 quadrupled those of 1972.

November 15, I attended a memorial service honoring slain diplomats Ambassador Rodger P. Davies (Cyprus), assassinated August 9, 1974, and Vice Consul John S. Patterson (Hermosillo), who was kidnaped and killed in Sonora in 1974. Hermosillo now appears on a memorial plaque in the entrance of the diplomatic lobby of the State Department. The sacrifices of fellow foreign service officers made me proud that I served in our Consulate General in Sonora.

One of President Ford's first contacts with Soviet Chairman Leonid Brezhnev was in Vladivostok. They agreed on some reductions in the production of nuclear arms. It was a continuation of détente with the Soviet Union, begun under President Nixon. His trip to Japan and Korea also contributed to US national security interests in the Pacific.

At the CU/ARA we were reminded of the 150th anniversary of the Declaration of Ayacucho, which secured Peru's independence from Spain.

President Ford, in his State of the Union address January 15, 1975, again emphasized energy policies, such as an import tax on crude oil, and development of coal, shale and oil resources.

I also had meetings with Fernando Debesa Marin, Director of Performing Arts of the University of Chile, and Sarah Counto Cesar, Director General of the National Center for Special Education (CENESP) of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

## Library of Congress

When other area officers went on leave it was my responsibility to take care of additional geographic areas. For example, Alice Ward, who handled countries such as Colombia, Peru, and the Caribbean, briefed me about the special needs of her grantees. I also met Clyde Best, Principal of the Barbados Community College. He was interested in community colleges in the US because of their emphasis on vocational education, which was much needed in the Caribbean.

On April 14, Oscar Coddou Vivanco, under secretary of the Chilean Army, and I attended a meeting in the office of Ambassador Hewson Anthony Ryan, Jr., deputy assistant secretary for Latin American affairs. (He served as US Ambassador to Honduras from 1969-1973.) We reviewed Chilean junta policies and their impact on Chilean political stability.

By mid-April the assault on South Vietnam intensified. Nguyen Van Thieu submitted his resignation, signaling that the collapse of the South Vietnam government was imminent. I put the following in my diary: "What a colossal defeat for us in terms of manpower, American lives, years of cooperation, in the military and economic fields. What a blow to our policies in the Far East." Cambodia fell quickly and our Embassy closed. Pressure on Thailand and Laos continued to intensify.

April 29, I attended a briefing at the National Academy of Sciences by the Board of Foreign Scholarships for South American Visiting professors.

The next day, the evacuation of Americans from Saigon was completed. Vietnamese refugees were leaving no matter what the price.

I had more meetings with representatives from South American republics, including Marcellus F. Singh, of the opposition in Parliament in Guyana. I took Emillo Matsumoto, Economics Editor of the Brazilian newspaper, Vega, to the Brazilian Desk at the Department. It proved to be a fruitful exchange of ideas about the new US Trade Act

## Library of Congress

and its implications for economic relations with Latin America. He mentioned that many Brazilians were skeptical about the Trade Act and felt that it was discriminatory. This was an interesting week, highlighted by a visit from Luciano Figueroa, Managing Editor of *El Mercurio*, in Valparaiso, Chile, who kept us up to date on political and economic events in Chile.

On May 12, 1975, we learned of the high seas seizure of the merchant ship *Mayaguez*. President Ford made a strong stance defending our basic rights of innocent passage. The *Mayaguez* was retaken by the US Navy two days later.

May 14, I met Ambassador Gabrera Muñoz who was in charge of cultural affairs in the Ministry of Foreign Relations in Mexico City. I had lunch in the Department with American Indian educators. Among those leaders were Dr. William Demmert, Jr., Deputy Commissioner of Indian Education, Department of Health, Education, and Welfare (HEW); and Dr. Dave Warren, Director of Research and Culture of the Institute of American Indian Art, in Santa Fe, New Mexico. Dr. Will Antell, Assistant Commissioner of Education, St. Paul, Minnesota, discussed opportunities for Indian students.

There was a follow up talk on Chilean political affairs with Grantee Ignacio Gonzales Camus, Press Chief of Radio Balmacedo, in Chile. He said that Radio Balmacedo reflects the philosophy of the Christian Democratic Party in Chile, the party which was in power before Salvador Allende. It was believed that the Chilean junta would regain credibility if they could solve some of the country's grave economic problems.

September 22, I held a briefing in my office for Efraim Gonzalez, Minister of Culture of the Republic of Honduras. Mr. Franklin Dolland, Minister of Labor, Youth, and Tourism, of Grenada, a young leader of his Caribbean island, also came to the United States to learn about youth programs.

I was also assigned to work on a special project for the Partners of the Americas. This was conceived by President Kennedy. The idea was to set up a people to people involvement

## Library of Congress

on special projects between the United States and Latin American countries. For example, when hurricane Edith battered Nicaragua and thousands were homeless, a call went out for help, not to Washington, but to Patrick Lucey, the Governor of Wisconsin. For several years, a partnership existed between Wisconsin and Nicaragua under the Partners of the America's plan. The State of Arkansas had a similar student exchange program, and sent medical personnel and equipment teams to Bolivia during an outbreak of a polio epidemic. The State of Michigan collected 80,000 books for Belize (formerly British Honduras) libraries. Our CU/ARA office contributed funds to these projects.

In the same month, Ambassador at large Ellsworth Bunker spoke to us about developing a new relationship with Panama, focusing on the sovereignty issue of the Canal Zone. There was interest to get the political process back on track.

October 14, I talked with Minister Percy Austin Bramble, Chief Minister of the Island of Montserrat. He made his interests known in the economic development of his country at a lunch of the Fort Myer Officer's Club.

My assignment in the office of Cultural and Educational Affairs would come to an end in a few months. I was therefore exploring openings in the consular field, which was my major fort#. October 15, I talked with Loren Lawrence, Deputy Director of the Office of Security and Consular Affairs. He was very knowledgeable in consular work and helped me with future foreign service assignments. There were also consultations on my career as a consular officer with Ms. Mulhearn, of the Visa office, and with Alan Gise, of the Office of Special Consular Services.

October 22, I attended the signing of a new accord on cultural exchanges between the United States and Mexico. I met Mexican Deputy Foreign Minister Gallastequi, who officiated at the ceremony.

At the end of October, Egyptian President Anwar Sadat made an important visit to Washington. His meetings with President Ford were the beginning of a thaw between

## Library of Congress

the Arab countries and the United States. Without Anwar Sadat at the helm, the Israeli-Palestinian negotiations would not have advanced to the stage they have reached today.

November 4, Leonard Chapman, Commissioner of the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS), spoke to us on the problems of illegal immigrants in the United States. He emphasized that US employers could make a significant contribution by reporting their hiring of foreign workers to the INS.

Later that month I was a special guest at Walt Disney Enterprises, in Washington. Since many of our grantees were visiting Disneyland, they told us about their EPCOT Project, which was being designed as an experimental prototype community of the future. Plans were underway to invite countries to participate at an international exhibit in Orlando, Florida.

On November 25, 1975, I was present at a meeting of ambassadors of Latin American countries, presided over by Mr. Lawrence Eagleburger, Executive Assistant to Secretary of State Henry Kissinger; and by Ambassador Carol Laise, Director General of the Foreign Service. The purpose of the meeting was to bolster the image of the OAS. Latin America wanted to extract some economic advantages from the United States.

On February 6, 1976, I received a congratulatory note from Leonard Walentynowicz, Administrator of the Bureau of Security and Consular Affairs (this position is now titled Assistant Secretary of State for Consular Affairs), on my promotion to a higher grade in the Foreign Service. Loren Lawrence, Deputy Administrator, also expressed satisfaction that my name appeared on the promotion list.

Maxwell Chaplin, our Director of CU/ARA, was reassigned as Deputy Chief of Mission in Buenos Aires. We were all sad to see him go.

Two months later I received my transfer from Cultural Affairs to the Visa Office. It was with some regret that I left this bureau because I felt that my contributions had been

## Library of Congress

appreciated. I received a note of appreciation from David Luria, Associate Director of the Partners of the Americas.

Just before I began my new assignment, I attended a debriefing on Secretary of State Kissinger's Latin America trip. He had met with Latin American leaders about the Panama Canal treaty, and Cuba's involvement in Angola was also on his agenda.

On March 18, Theodore Britten, our Ambassador to Barbados, came to meet Jim Briggs and Deputy Director of CU/ARA Dwight Mason, to review the cultural program in Barbados. Dwight and I had an excellent rapport and he proved to be an able acting director of the Bureau.

### The Visa Office

My new assignment was in the Written Inquiries branch of the Special Consular Services Visa Office, and involved preparing written replies to visa inquiries from members of Congress. The Visa Office was headed by Julio Arias, a veteran foreign service officer. It was a good opportunity to reacquaint myself with visa operations and procedures. I became familiar with substantial changes in immigration legislation emanating from the Eastman and Rodino immigration bills. I worked with three qualified foreign service officers, Steve Dobrenchuk, Ed Martinez, and Marvin Groeneweg. Correspondence with Congress was first screened by the State Department's office of the Assistant Secretary of State for Congressional Relations.

On July 23, due to the international crisis in Lebanon, I was temporarily detailed to the Beirut task force. We received many inquiries from American citizens whose relatives left for neighboring countries, such as Syria, Egypt, and Greece. I had to contact American families on behalf of stranded Lebanese families who wanted to seek refuge in the United States. I also handled many visa inquiries involving residents of the People's Republic of China, who wanted to emigrate to the United States.



## Library of Congress

January 12, 1977, I attended a special staff meeting in the Visa Office, presided over by Director Julio Arias. Leonard Walentynowicz, administrator of the Bureau of Security and Consular Affairs (the post was later renamed Assistant Secretary of State for Consular Affairs), came to bid us farewell. He told us that his successor, Barbara Watson, would come on board in a few weeks.

President Ford stayed the course until the end of his term. In his last State of the Union address he asked for additional military expenditures to offset the Soviet military buildup.

On January 26, in a meeting with Judy Schmidt in Personnel, I learned of a possible assignment for me in Antwerp, Belgium. This was confirmed on February 16. It was a choice assignment, given the fact that they needed a consular officer with fluency in Flemish and French to do substantial political reporting in Flanders.

March 1, I accepted the Antwerp assignment and, subsequently, Antwerp Consul General John Heimann sent me a welcome letter. In the meantime, Ma##t# underwent emergency surgery at Jefferson Memorial Hospital, but all went well and we were able to prepare for our new Antwerp post. We were lucky, however, that we were able to delay our departure for Antwerp until the end of April.

Preparation was hectic. In addition to political and consular briefings on Belgium, I attended an anti-terrorist course at the Foreign Service Institute.

On April 27, 1977, we departed for Antwerp from Dulles International Airport.

### CHAPTER XIIIThe Consulate General, Antwerp

I feel that it was my destiny to become a foreign service officer, but it was also my desire to give something back to my adopted country, the United States of America. In this elite corps of professionals, I felt that I could make a difference. Where else could I make such

## Library of Congress

a contribution to the United States than in my native Flanders, where I was familiar with local history, customs, and languages.

When the State Department sent me to the US Consulate General in Antwerp, Belgium, as consular officer, I knew that this was, besides being a great honor, the opportunity I sought to represent the US in my native Belgium. But I also realized that it was a call to discharge special responsibilities. When I entered the US Foreign Service there was a strict policy that Foreign Service employees were not sent for duty to their country of birth. When I arrived in Flanders, I realized that US-Belgian relations were at a high point, but that there were new NATO-US military priorities taking place, and that Belgium would play a pivotal role in the military security of Europe. Brussels was already the center of NATO and also the European Common Market (EEC) now called the European Community (EC).

When we arrived in Antwerp we stayed at the Euro Studio hotel until we found permanent quarters. Gerard Viaene, Consulate driver, was very helpful in driving us where we needed to go to do the essential errands of settling in.

May 1, 1977, Consul General John and Judith Heimann made us feel right at home at a luncheon at their residence, where I met other American officers and Consular Officer Bea Hemingway, of the Embassy in Brussels.

The next day we went for orientation to the Embassy where Eugene Champagne and Steve Hayden, of Administration, helped us to enroll Rebecca at the Antwerp International School, in Ekeren, near Antwerp. John Heimann was a likable principal officer and one of the most intellectual Foreign Service Officers I ever worked for. He said, "Your key goal here will be to develop political reporting with Flemish leaders in West Flanders." He felt confident that my Flemish language skills and Flemish cultural acumen would be an asset in developing those contacts. He also pointed out that the weekly staff meeting with the Ambassador in Brussels was crucial for Consulate Antwerp to intertwine information and operation procedures. Antwerp was a constituent post, and we enjoyed considerable

## Library of Congress

independence, but in major decisions we depended on the American Embassy, in Brussels, for guidance on political reporting and for administrative and protocol support.

May 6, I accompanied John on one of these Embassy staff meetings. I met Deputy Chief of Mission (DCM) John C. Renner and Acting Deputy Chief of Mission Arthur J. Olsen.

With Secretary Watson in Vienna

I had barely settled into the hotel when I received orders to go to Vienna to attend the Consular Officers Conference. This was an opportunity to exchange ideas with other American consular officers in Western Europe. On May 9, the first day of the conference, Assistant Secretary of State for Consular Affairs Barbara Watson, in her opening remarks, referred to the fact that Americans were traveling abroad more than ever before. The US Congress had given her a priority mandate to give maximum consular assistance to Americans traveling abroad. "This is gaining nationwide acceptance," she said. She was an impressive diplomat, and made her career championing the cause of American citizens' services and human rights. In 1980, Secretary Watson was appointed as American Ambassador to Malaysia.

At a dinner that evening I met some of my consular colleagues: Jim Lassiter, Consul in Brussels; Mr. Berg, former Vice Consul in Antwerp; Theodore B. Dobbs, Consul General in Edinburgh; and Paul McCarthy, Consul in Dublin.

The meeting in Vienna also permitted me to visit the Rubens collection at the historical art museum. The baroque churches added to the splendor and elegance of the Austrian capital.

Consular Duties in Antwerp

In Antwerp I issued many B1 and B2 visas (business and pleasure). Many Flemish travel agents sent lists of Flemish travelers who wanted to visit the US Since the dollar was

## Library of Congress

fairly low against the Belgian Franc, it was advantageous for Belgians to travel to the US. The depreciation of the US dollar affected Americans living in our Consular District. Many Social Security pensioners were affected by the drop in the dollar. It also made it more difficult for our American staff to entertain additional guests, due to the inflated expenses.

There was a substantial increase in the issuance of nonimmigrant visas (B1 and B2) and crew lists. Through my personal intervention with the ministries of labor and justice, I was able to obtain an extension of the resident permits for American businessmen. I was also able to reduce the sentences of some Americans in prison, and to integrate an American Fulbright professor into Flemish cultural life during his two month lecture tour at Antwerp University. As administrative officer, I was responsible for disbursing, the administration of consular fees, and general maintenance problems and security. FSN Jack West was my able, administrative right hand man in this area.

During my first month I called on other consular colleagues accredited to Antwerp: Louis Simao, Chancellor and Consular Officer of the Netherlands; John Kelly, Vice Consul of England; and Consul Jacques Sourdy and Vice Consul Ren# Mennev#e of the French Consulate General. I also paid courtesy calls on Sven Kristoffersen, Chief of Antwerp Police, and H. Berebroucks, Director General of Customs. In the evening, I attended a reception given by the Port Authority of the Port of Houston at the Crest Hotel. I met Mrs. Perry, Board Chairwoman; George W. Altvater, Executive Director of the Port of Houston; and C. A. Rousser, Director Trade Development. These Houston managers developed good contacts with Antwerp port officials.

In late May, I also paid a call on Colonel Robert Bellenger, Commander of the Rykswacht (police) in Antwerp and Limburg provinces. In his presentation about the police organization he explained its ties to the ministries of War, Interior and Justice.

I was not long on board in Antwerp before the government of Belgium underwent a serious crisis. Leo Tindemans, of the CVP party (traditional Catholic party), attempted to form a

## Library of Congress

coalition government of four parties: CVP, BSP (socialists), FDF (French linguistic party), and VU (Flemish Nationalists), with the PVV (Liberals) in opposition. Leo Tindemans, who later moved on to the European Parliament, was a well-versed and experienced Prime Minister and former foreign minister. Consul General John Heimann knew him personally, and we continued to cultivate this rapport. In spite of linguistic (French and Flemish) and cultural differences, Belgium had been fortunate to produce effective political leaders to bridge the gap and to lead a national government.

On May 26, I called on Commander Colonel Gabriel Bogaerts of the Rykswacht (police) in Antwerp. Our first courtesy call developed into a long term friendship. He was an excellent student of history. He said, "Western civilization is going through a transition. It should be a peaceful one to keep institutions intact." He was very enthusiastic about my assignment to Antwerp.

I did not wait long to develop political contacts in the Province of West Flanders (one of the nine provinces in Belgium — to the north). On May 27 I called on Jan Piers, Mayor of the City of Ostend, and Chief of Police Van Wallegheem. Oscar Vermeulen, Chief of Immigration and Mr. Vromant, Chief of Customs, joined us for lunch at the Thermidor. One of the topics that came up was that the Beyaert Company of Antwerp had been guilty of polluting the waters, and that this had affected the fishing industry. Later, we visited the Ostend Airport terminal where Mr. Willems, Deputy Director showed us the Radar Room. Mr. De Wilde, head of the control tower, was also present.

May 29, the Consul General and I attended Memorial Day services at Flanders Field, in Waregem, and the graves of World War I Americans. This is an annual rite which is taken very seriously in Antwerp and by the US Embassy in Brussels. Deputy Chief of Mission John Renner and Mayor Coucke, of Waregem, were among the dignitaries.

In June, Rebecca and I attended a basketball game between Belgium and the US. We were the guests of Mayor Masure, of Merksem, Antwerp, and Hugo Tops, Alderman for

## Library of Congress

culture. Secretary Jules Simkens, of the Brussels Basketball Federation, joined us at a reception at the Quality Inn Hotel.

In my visit to Pierre Van Outryve d'Ydewalle, Governor of West Flanders, we discussed the commercial future of the Port of Zeebrugge. I also met Roger de Bree, Chief of Police in Bruges. We discussed the political situation in Bruges in the aftermath of the defeat of CVP Mayor Michel Van Maele. He led me around the new police headquarters and introduced me to several prison directors of penitentiaries in Bruges. Visiting such installations are helpful to a consular officer.

We attended a reception by the new US Ambassador to Belgium, Anne Cox Chambers, who was appointed by President Carter. They were personal friends. She showed us the private quarters at the residence and her social secretary pointed out a painting of the Ambassador's son by American portraitist Elizabeth Shumatoff, who painted Franklin D. Roosevelt, Lyndon B. Johnson, Mrs. Henry Clay Frick, and others.

In mid June, I represented the Consul General at the graduation of the International School of Antwerp, held in the General Motors auditorium. I met headmaster John Evers and Herman De Croo, former Minister of Education, who talked about the role of education and the advantages of international schools.

### Politics in West Flanders

June 17, I paid an official visit to Joseph Lambrecht, Mayor of the city of Kortryk (Courtrai). He showed me the old City Hall and presented me with a souvenir of the golden spurs, which symbolized the defeat of the French by the Flemings.

Mayor Lambrecht complained of the lack of foreign investment in Kortryk, and that the city had to rely on small family businesses. I learned more about Flemish politics at a lunch with Luc Van Steenkiste, a member of Parliament (VU party). The VU party represented

## Library of Congress

Flemish nationalist goals. He said, "The purpose of the VU will be to act as a watchdog to ensure that Flemish interests are protected at the national level."

Later in the month I made a courtesy call to Daniel Coens, Mayor of Damme and CVP member of Parliament. Daniel and I became good friends and we saw each other from time to time to review political trends in Flanders.

At a reception of the Consulate General of West Germany for departing Consul and Mrs. Hellmut Friebe, I met Vice Consul Siegfried Rapp, Commander De Wilt, military commander of Antwerp, and Mr. Jacques Vinckier, of the Maritime Authority in Antwerp. A few days later I met British Vice Consul Kelly and Consul General Peeters.

On June 28, I was invited to lunch at the Residence in honor of Ambassador Anne Cox Chambers. The guests included: Count Daniel Le Grelle; Earl Shank, Kenneth W. Deters, of Tradox; A.O. Hamon. of the American Chamber of Commerce; Laurence Schwartz; and John Evers.

In June I met Mrs. Mathilde Schroyens, Socialist Mayor of Antwerp, and Consul General Keulen, Dean of the Consular Corps in Antwerp.

In July, I had a meeting with Frank Van Acker, Socialist Mayor of Bruges, who also served as a member of the Belgian Parliament. He was a somewhat shy, but business-like, politician. He was born to politics. (His father, Achiel Van Acker, had twice served as Belgian Prime Minister, and was a supporter of the Socialist labor unions and major social legislation in Belgium.)

From time to time US ships would come into the port of Antwerp. On July 5, I had lunch with Commander Williamson on board the USS Semmes.

## Library of Congress

On July 21, I attended the Independence Day ceremonies of Belgium in Ostend. Others in attendance at the mayor's office were the Consul of Senegal and Monaco, and Clinton Thomas, Consul of England.

Deputy Chief of Mission Renner left the Embassy and Ambassador Chambers appointed Arthur Olsen as his replacement. Francis Tarr and John Grimes continued in the political section.

In August I had a long talk with CVP member of Parliament, Marc Olivier, in his home district of Kortryk. His views on Belgian and Flemish politics were similar to that of Daniel Coens. He said, "The CVP (Catholic) party is a party of the right for which support is flowing from the middle classes, farmers and Christian workers belonging to the Christian Labor Unions (ACW)." He showed less interest in linguistic cultural programs and felt that the Flemish and Walloons should get along together.

I also visited some of the US military bases in the provinces of Limburg and Antwerp. At Kleine Breughel I met Commander Robert Baker and Captain David Creamer. This was a NATO munition support installation. In Hoogbuul I visited a US transport unit where Major Wesley R. Ostergren introduced me to his staff. West and I became good friends. He and his wife were very interested in promoting American-Belgian relations. They made a concerted effort to learn the Flemish language, and therefore, were able to entertain Flemish guests at their home.

I would often coordinate my consular projects with Consul Jim Lassiter in Brussels. One of these cases was of Philip Vockth, an Indian born on Diego Garcia Island. I contacted Mrs. L. Biacsko-Harts, of the Ecumenical Social Protestant Service. Since Vockth was asking refugee status I referred the case to that office.

Early in my tour of duty at Antwerp, I had a long visit with Fernand Traen, President of the Bruges-Zeebrugge Port Authority (NBZ). Traen was a powerful man of the Port of Bruges,



## Library of Congress

and had harbored some political ambitions to become mayor of Bruges. We talked about the US-Belgian Ammunition agreement for Zeebrugge. He did not think that it would be practical to renew it because of the gas terminal that would be in operation. "This would be hazardous to the Belgian coastline," he said. He favored continued US investment in Flanders and Belgium, but expressed concern about political uncertainties in Western Europe.

In September I met Francois Van de Weyer, head of the foreign police in Antwerp. He and his assistant, Eugene Dhont, would often assist me with passport problems affecting American citizens.

Our arrival in Antwerp coincided with the 400th anniversary of the birth of Peter Paul Rubens, the famous Flemish Baroque painter (1577-1640). No one living in Antwerp could escape this cultural event. We in the consulate had a private viewing of these Rubens masterpieces in the Antwerp Museum of Fine Arts. On September 6 we had a private viewing of the Rubens paintings for the consular corps of Antwerp.

September 9, Ma#t# and Rebecca joined me in ceremonies honoring those killed at the Breendock concentration camp near Antwerp. A representative of the King was there. It was a poignant reminder of Nazi atrocities during World War II. Antwerp was also a haven for Jewish refugees who were fleeing the persecution of the Holocaust.

Ambassador Cox Chambers was interested in Flemish art and would often ask me to accompany her to cultural events, such as American Day at the Ghent (Capital of the province of East Flanders) Fair. At that occasion, the Ambassador gave a reception at the Flemish International Club in St. Peter's Abbey. I met many interesting people from the Ghent area: George De Ronne, Curator of the Abbey; Mr. Wyffels, Cultural Center Director; Mayor De Paepe, of Ghent; Nellie Maes, VU party member of Parliament (St. Nicholas); Senator E. De Facqu (VU Party), Member of Parliament; and Timmerman and Jacques Verh#, Town Clerk of the City Hall, in Ghent.

## Library of Congress

September 30 a reception was held at the residence of the Consul General for Ambassador to NATO and Mrs. Bennett, which I attended.

West German Vice Consul Rapp and Vice Consul of Sweden in Ghent, Philip Madou, often called on visa matters or other issues relating to investments or travel to the United States.

In October, I visited some American prisoners in an Antwerp penitentiary. I knew Dr. A. Thiry, director of this facility, very well, and this helped me in dealing with problems affecting US citizens and their special needs.

My duties in protocol and political reporting increased as time went on, and I had many options from which to choose, to decide which social events to attend, always giving consideration to invitations that would enhance American-Belgian political interests.

In an official visit to Mayor Albert Biesbroeck, of Roeselare, West Flanders, we talked about George Rodenbach, a well known Belgian poet whose grandfather had been Consul General and Ambassador to Greece. He showed me some mementos of the Polish liberation of Roeselare. There were paintings in the City Hall of famous Flemish painters such as Permeke, Blomme, and Verbaere.

In the afternoon I drove to the old city of Torhout (near Bruges) where I had a meeting with Mayor Carlos Daled. We talked about the Flemings who emigrated to the New World in the early part of the century. Many of them settled in Michigan, particularly in the areas of Detroit, and in Ontario, Canada. When I visited these small Flemish towns, I discovered that many townspeople had family ties with relatives in the US and Canada.

On October 12, I attended the graduation ceremonies of the Maritime School in Antwerp. I met J.P. Van Dyck, Chief of Staff of the Belgian Navy. Professor Wilmet spoke of the advances of research in US communications.

## Library of Congress

Arthur Olsen, Deputy Chief of Mission at the Embassy in Brussels, encouraged me to explore new contacts in Flanders. He, like other Embassy officials, considered our presence in Antwerp vital to US foreign policy and national security interests. NATO and US plans to introduce cruise missiles in Western Europe were their main concerns.

On board the U.S.S. Whitney I met with USMC Brigadier General A. M. Gray. He was the commanding general of the Fourth Marine Amphibious Battalion.

In October, we gave our first reception at home for members of the Consulate General and Belgian officials. We also represented the Consulate at the Flemish Ballet of Flanders, and saw Porgy and Bess at Elizabeth Hall. Besides consular business, Antwerp offered many opportunities to learn about Flemish art and culture.

Ambassador Cox Chambers was again our guest for lunch at the residence in Antwerp, and I was able to introduce Minister Daniel Coens to her. After lunch, I accompanied the Ambassador to a reception at Rockox House, which is administered by the Krediet Bank. I met Mr. L. Wouters, President of the Krediet Bank, as well as the former Belgian Prime Minister Gaston Eyskens. Ambassador Cox Chambers was interested in the furnishings and paintings of the Rockox House. Nicholas Rockox was a Mayor of Antwerp during Rubens' life and a patron of the arts. In this capacity, he sponsored many of Rubens' diplomatic ventures abroad.

On October 27, I acted as Escort Officer for the Ambassador on her official visit to Bruges and Kortryk (second largest city in West Flanders). Our first call was to Pierre van Outryve d'Ydewalle, Governor of West Flanders. Consul General John Heimann was also present. Our party was received in the lovely drawing room of the Governor's palace. We had lunch with officials of the N.V. Bekaert firm (steel wire and cord), in Zwevegem. In the afternoon we called on Mr. J. Lambrechts, the mayor of Kortryk.

## Library of Congress

Barbara Wilson, Social Security representative in Frankfurt, and I had lunch at the American Belgian Association.

During November, I prepared for my final oral exam at George Mason University, but many events preceded my departure on November 19.

On the U.S.S. Finback, a nuclear submarine docked in Zeebrugge (Port of Bruges), I talked with Commander P.M. Heath. I also visited US citizen, Jim Schumann, at Stuyvenberg Hospital, who had been in a car accident in Antwerp. At commemorative services at Marie Jose, the French Lycee, I met the director, Andre Van Fracken. The Consuls General of Argentina, Colombia, and Haiti were also present.

Ma## and I went to the Sabat Mater, by Antonin Dvorak, in the Charles Borromeus Church, in Antwerp. These church concerts were unforgettable experiences.

When I returned after a good outcome of my Master's degree test in history, I was just in time for the Ambassador's Christmas party for the staff at Chateau St. Anne in Brussels.

After Christmas I went to the Central Police Station in Antwerp to meet a US citizen who had been detained for illegally practicing medicine in Belgium. I also visited a US citizen in the prison of Ghent, and talked with the director of that prison in connection with another detention case.

On January 6, 1978, President Carter arrived in Brussels to deliver an address to the European Common Market. Every visit to Brussels by an American president was carefully planned in advance because of the importance of Brussels as the headquarters of NATO and the European Community (EC). The Belgian Prime Minister and his cabinet, US embassy officials, and other dignitaries, were at the Zaventem International Airport, in Brussels, to welcome President Carter.

## Library of Congress

I met Emmanuel De Sutter, CVP member of Parliament and former Mayor of Knokke-Heist. Although this fashionable beach city had been a traditional PVV (liberal party) stronghold, De Sutter had put Knokke-Heist in the CVP column in 1977. He believed that the elections for the European parliament were of great importance. He did identify some Flemish leaders, such as Leo Tindemans and Wilfred Martens, who would serve well. It so happened that both serve (to this day) in the European Parliament. Karel Van Miert, former leader of the Flemish Socialist Party, whom we befriended, is also an influential Flemish leader in the European Parliament.

A consul in Antwerp has many responsibilities related to the Port. On January 18, I called on Customs Inspector Buyst on behalf of American citizen Rexford Smith, who was the manager of Sea-Land Belgium. His wife's car papers were not in order and I was able to help by cutting red tape.

During my tenure as US Consul in Antwerp I became acquainted with Mr. Serrien, President of the American Field Service (AFS). This group was instrumental in finding hospitality and homes for American students studying in Belgium. Mr. and Mrs. Serrien lived in Aertselare and were very active in AFS. One evening we attended a benefit concert at their home, given by musician Jos. Van Immerseel.

One night I received a call from the police in Harelbeke. The Van den Driessche family informed me of the death of their American son, Joe, in Oran, Algeria. Since there were no details on the cause of death, I immediately sent some cables to our Embassy in Algiers to request the circumstances of his death and to facilitate the shipment of his remains to Belgium.

On 30 January we attended a buffet at the home of German Vice Consul and Mrs. Rapp. The King's attorney, Van De Hoeynants, was guest of honor. Consul Wiegand of West Germany and French Vice Consul Mennev#e also attended.

## Library of Congress

Many art and music groups came to Flanders. One night I met Cliff Keuter, Director of the Cliff Keuter Dance Company of New York. During the intermission of his show at the Flemish Opera House in Antwerp, I was introduced to Colonel Lismont, Vice President of the Belgian Red Cross, and other local officials.

On February 19, 1978, our daughter Rebecca was confirmed by Monsignor William Van Kester in the chapel of St. Joseph's Mission in Antwerp. We had a family reunion afterwards. Both the first communion and confirmation are considered important milestones for children in the Catholic faith.

### Antwerp's Strategic Location

During the late 1970s, the State Department had earmarked the Consulate General, in Antwerp, for closure, in order to meet Washington's budgetary cuts. The Flemish people, Belgian officials, and US consular officers, were very much opposed to closing the post. Antwerp is the most important port city in the northwestern part of Belgium on the River Schelde. It had been one of the vital posts during both world wars. In the 1970s, because of the community and linguistic problems in Belgium, our foreign policy goals were to keep close contact with both Flemish political leaders and Walloon (French speaking) officials. Antwerp's metropolitan and historical importance provided an ideal site for an active American consular presence. During this evolutionary period, many Flemish leaders were favorably disposed to support US plans to place short range missiles in Belgium and other European countries to counter balance Soviet missile superiority in the European theater. There was no disagreement about the importance of the Antwerp Consulate General's role in the political affairs of Europe and NATO. Our job was to convince foreign service inspectors, who made occasional visits to Antwerp. We tried to do this during several such inspections, and we were able to keep the Consulate General open until the early 1990s. Even today, people in Flanders (which represents 60% of the Belgian population) would prefer doing business with consular officials in Antwerp rather than with the Embassy in Brussels. Our closing of the Consulate General in Antwerp, on July 1, 1992, was a setback

## Library of Congress

for our strategic presence in Flanders, and traditional rapport with Flemish power brokers. In spite of the vicissitudes of Belgian regionalization policies, Flanders is now the stable political cultural force in Belgium.

My friend, Jacques Guffens, Judge of the Appellate Court in Antwerp, and now President of the North Atlantic Organization, in Belgium, knew of the importance of NATO, and was influential in keeping the post open.

March was a busy month. The U.S.S. Potomac came into port. There were some morale problems with the crew and I was asked to go on board to talk with the ship's personnel.

Ma## started a temporary assignment at the US Embassy in Brussels. The daily commuting was no easy task, but we managed.

March 7, a diplomatic incident put Antwerp in the world spotlight. The well known Baron Bracht, Honorary Consul of Austria and Antwerp, was kidnaped. The kidnapper was just interested in cash. The Baron was killed on the spot while the kidnaping took place, but the assassin gave the impression that the Baron was still alive. Three weeks later they discovered the Baron's body and the assassin was arrested. It was not a act of terrorism, but a criminal act that caused widespread consternation in Belgium. I visited an ill US citizen at the city hospital in Roeselare. Mr. Reynaerts, Administrator of the hospital, took a special interest in the case. When I returned to Antwerp I attended a reception by the Navy (NATO Sea Sparrow) with Vice Admiral J. P. Van Dyck as host.

A few days later I tried to clear up some problems for a distraught American businessman in Waasmunster who was concerned about the whereabouts of his family.

One of my duties as Consul was to identify some outstanding Flemish political leaders who would qualify as international visitor grantees. Mark Olivier, a member of the Parliament of the CVP, in Kortryk, was one of those leaders. So were Flemish Minister of Education Daniel Coens and Manu De Sutter, of Knokke-Heist, and Marcel Colla (now Minister of

## Library of Congress

Pensions in the de Haene government), of Antwerp. The ambassador wanted to meet these selected candidates individually before putting her stamp of approval on them.

One day we drove to Namur and Liège, (two interesting historic cities in Wallonia, in southern Belgium). In Namur, the Sambre and Meuse Rivers converge and offer impressive scenery. At Our Lady's Institute we admired the Reliquary of St. Peter by Hugo Oignies (1280), one of the wonders of Belgium. Liège is a steel manufacturing city. The baptismal fountain in the Romanesque St. Bartholomeus Church is another Belgian treasure. In this part of Belgium my French proved useful.

March 29, I met Marc Bourry, the (BSP-Socialist party) Mayor of Harelbeke. He showed concern that the VU and FDF parties (linguistic parties) did not share the broad political vision of Prime Minister Leo Tindemans, and were only interested in nationalistic issues, whereas the Belgium Socialist Party (BSP), Mr. Bourry's party, and the CVP (Christian Democratic party), wanted to tackle pressing economic issues, such as the national budget deficit. Belgium provided a generous social safety net to its workers and families, and they began to talk about reducing some of the family allocation benefits and unemployment compensation. He stated, "Belgium can ill afford the luxury of prolonged linguistic fights when the economy is in serious recession." On the international spectrum, Bourry felt that Belgium's role in Africa and the Third World should be one of helping accelerate socioeconomic development.

### Consular Conference in Paris

On April 10, I attended the Consular Conference in Paris, which was chaired by Deputy Assistant Secretary for Consular Affairs Robert Hennemeyer. Consul General Morgan explained the visa operation in the US Embassy in Paris. The next day we all went to the American Ambassador's residence for a reception given by Ambassador and Mrs. Arthur A. Hartman. Ambassador Hartman held the Paris post from January 1977 through October 1981. The residence was formerly a Rothschild mansion.



## Library of Congress

During this trip to Paris, I visited the Pompidou Museum (named for the late French President Georges Pompidou) near City Hall, and La Bastille. The museum has grown into an important center for visiting artists and tourists. The importance of the Paris consular conference was to get to know key persons in visa and special consular services of the State Department in Washington.

On my return I had a full day of activities in West Flanders. I had lunch with Dries Vandenabeele, Municipal Counselor in Bruges; paid a brief visit to see the Ensor paintings in Ostend; and then attended the 175th anniversary session of the Belgium Bank of Commerce and Industry at the Casino in Ostend. King Baudewyn and Prime Minister Leo Tindemans honored the event with their presence. We tried to have a US Consulate representative at all of these functions.

April 23, I attended the Memorial Day ceremony by the American Legion at Flanders Field, in Waregem, West Flanders. In the name of the Consul General I delivered a speech in Flemish honoring veterans of World War I and II.

My consular staff, Ed Carnas, Josie Stoffels, Gilberte De Bruycker, Ludo De Bell, and Patty Verschurren were capable of handling large visa loads, crew lists, and social security cases. Whenever we had Social Security or Internal Revenue Service representatives visit Americans, these able associates would prepare their files.

April 28, I went to a reception for Ambassador and Mrs. Deane Hinton, US Ambassador to the European Community (Ambassador Hinton also served as US Envoy to Panama), followed by a dinner at the American Belgian Association.

In May, I attended a concert for opera singers at Elckerlyc, which was under the auspices of the Ministry of Flemish Culture. I met Jo Ella Tod, an American who had won the opera singing contest.

## Library of Congress

Problems with the Zaire (a former Belgian colony) government and the disastrous violence in Shaba created tensions within the Belgian government. Prime Minister Leo Tindemans and Foreign Minister Simonet were at odds on how to deal with the Soviet-Cuban intervention in Africa.

### Acting Consul General

May 26, Consul General Heimann departed the post and Ambassador Cox Chambers put me in charge of the Consulate General. It was made known to the Dean of the Antwerp Consular Corps that I would be Acting Consul General. It was an awesome experience for a few days. I was in charge of the Consulate General's affairs for about three months. FSN Lydia Van Hove had been the Consul General's secretary for a long time. She was a great help to me during these busy months. Besides my regular consular duties I attended several staff meetings in Brussels, and my social schedule and official representation tripled. At that time I learned how to become an efficient manager and allot my time according to priorities.

Ambassador Cox Chambers, Consul General Heimann, and I were again in Waregem to attend Memorial Day services May 28. It was a beautiful, sunny day in Flanders Field, where the poppies grow. The Mayor of Waregem quoted from the famous Flanders Field poem, "If you break faith with us who die we shall not sleep-though poppies grow in Flanders Field."

May 31, Rebecca and I attended a concert given by Romanian-American singer Hermina Petrescu Stowell, at Arenberg Hall. She sang folkloric songs, and was very popular with the audience.

One of my duties as Acting Consul General was to attend the British Queen Elizabeth's birthday parade at the military camp of Emblem. We sat on the Honor Tribune (stand) with British Ambassador to Belgium Sir David, and Mr. Moller, President of the British Legion.

## Library of Congress

In June I made an official visit to Ieper (West Flanders), the historic battle city of World War I. Mayor Albert De Hem and I talked for several hours. We were joined by CVP Alderman Paul Breyne, of Ieper (who later became a member of Parliament in Belgium). Later we visited a memorial chapel that honors the fallen heroes of World War I. There are about 250,000 British graves in Ieper. I took time out to visit the American firm, Klippan (which manufactures seat belts and suitcases), and talked with its manager, Irman Hoorweghe. Later I paid a courtesy visit to Albrecht Sansen, Mayor of Poperinge (near Ieper). The visits to Klippan and H. D. Lee confirmed the good relations between Ieper City Hall and US plant management.

### Port of Antwerp: Political Power

On June 14, 1978, Leo Delwaide, Alderman for the Port of Antwerp, and often referred to as the "Lion of Flanders," died. I sent condolences to Antwerp Mayor Mathilde Schroyens. On the same day I talked with Count Daniel Legrelle, manager of Continental Bank SA, following a lecture at Cercle Royal in Brussels. He stated that Jan Huyghebaert, CVP Municipal Councilman, and a member of Prime Minister Tindemans' cabinet, would be chosen to replace Delwaide. Mr. Huyghebaert was a young and independent political leader without any strong ties to the unions. Legrelle believed that this was important.

The real power of the Port of Antwerp was Manager Robert Vleugels who was appointed by the City Council for life. His job was of an executive nature, and wielded behind the scenes influence in policy making, affecting the Port of Antwerp.

In Antwerp, we also had the Regional Logistical Office (ELSO) for transshipment of household effects of foreign service personnel worldwide. It was a forwarding office and our Consulate General provided administrative support to them. ELSO fell under our diplomatic umbrella. I developed good contacts with Director Warren Nixon and Eugene Trahan. Officers assigned to ELSO also participated in the consular duty schedules on

## Library of Congress

weekends and holidays, and were part of the protocol events taking place in our consular districts.

As had been predicted, Jan Huyghebaert was nominated CVP Alderman of the Port of Antwerp, which was probably the most influential job in the city. I talked with him at length during an official visit to City Hall. Mr. Huyghebaert was a rising star on the political scene in Belgium. He was the alter ego of Prime Minister Leo Tindemans. Both Huyghebaert and Tindemans thought in a broader European context. He told me that he wanted to be even handed in his policy on the Port of Antwerp. He also said he would encourage multinationals to use the port, and stated that he wanted to find new customers for the port in the developing areas of Africa and Asia to counterbalance the strong Soviet presence in Antwerp. The Soviet Consulate let their presence be known in Antwerp, but were very inconspicuous about it. At a party, one day, I met Boris Ivanov, Vice Consul of the USSR. Huyghebaert is now President of the Almany Holding and Sabena Airlines, and is still a person to be reckoned with on the political scene. My frequent conversations with Flemish political leaders provided valuable biographic material for our political experts at the Embassy.

Late in June I was the guest speaker at a Rotary Club meeting in the Eurocrest Hotel, followed by a question and answer session on the US Foreign Service. The Rotary Club has been, over the years, a good forum for speakers on international affairs and amity among people.

The Plantin Moretus Museum, in Antwerp, had a special exhibit on the Flemish painter Jacob Jordaens. Director Conservator Leon Voet and his adjunct Conservator Miss Francine De Nave, accompanied me throughout the exhibit. Conservator Leon Voet spoke with enthusiasm about his contacts at the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, DC, and of his visits to the Capital to establish contacts in cultural circles. I also went to the opening of the Jordaens exhibit at the Antwerp Museum of Fine Arts and met curator Dr. Gilberte Gepts.

## Library of Congress

At a reception at the City Hall of Kortryk in honor of visiting Belgian Consul General in New York, Ren# Van Hauwermeiren I got acquainted with Minister Duquae of Boerenbond (Flemish Farmers Union), Baron de Bethunen, and CVP member of Parliament of Kortryk, Antoon Steverlynck. Afterwards, we were invited for dinner by Member of Parliament Mark Olivier invited us for dinner.

On June 26 I went to the Embassy to attend a special meeting of the International Visitors Program in Belgium. As Acting Consul General, I was a guest at the home of Mr. and Mrs. P.N. Ferstenberg, Director and Dean of the Antwerp diamond industry. It was the most elegant social affair I had ever attended. I met Belgian Ministers Segers and Frans Grootjans; Consul General Picard Moya, of the Dominican Republic; and other Belgian and foreign guests. We were also guests at a private dinner at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Mahendra Mehta, in Antwerp, who were well known diamond dealers and were involved in philanthropy. They told me that when Mother Teresa travels to Belgium, she is an overnight guest in their home.

Socialist Mayor of Herentals, Carl DePeuter, arranged for me to visit officials of the General Biscuit Company. After lunch I saw the art work of sculptor Fraiken. In the evening I attended a concert in the picturesque hills of Dworp-Beersel of the Province of Flemish Brabant. It was a convivial cultural event in which Sylvia Traey and Robert Groslot, laureates of the International Queen Elizabeth Recital participated. I met them afterward and was also introduced to Minister of Flemish Culture, Rita De Backer, and Economic Minister Willy Claes (who is a musician in his own right and later became Secretary General of NATO).

June 30, I drove to Wondelgem to attend a reception for the Michigan Fine Arts Symphony. The next day I was a guest at a concert in Antwerp by a Michigan Bluegrass group.

## Library of Congress

In July, I was a guest at a reception at the Norwegian Seaman's Club given by the Consul General of Norway on the occasion of the birthday of the King of Norway. Later in the day I was asked to raise the US flag and gave a US Independence address for the American community gathered at their annual picnic on the Brown estate in Ekeren-Kapellen (near Antwerp). I also met Mr. Hendrickx, the new director of Antwerp Customs.

On July 4, I attended the annual Independence Day reception at the residence of Ambassador Cox Chambers.

July 6, I visited the Flemish poet Karel Van de Woestyne exhibit in the Museum for Flemish Cultural Life in Antwerp, on the occasion of the 100th anniversary of his birth. The exhibit provided a comprehensive overview of Flemish culture, folklore, music and literature.

July 11 is a famous Flemish holiday (Battle of the Spurs in Courtrai, in 1302) celebrating a Flemish victory over French invaders, We were invited to an Elizabeth Hall recital where Antwerp Mayor Mathilda Schroyens spoke on Flemish rights.

July 21, I represented the Consulate General at the Belgian Independence Day ceremonies. We reviewed the parade at the Leopold I Monument, followed by a reception at City Hall and a TE DEUM at St. James Church.

Later I received an impromptu invitation from the Ambassador to accompany her for lunch with Mr. Chambers at Fornuis Restaurant, in Antwerp. I also went with the Ambassador to the diamond headquarters where the manager of the Ferstenberg firm showed us the private diamond collection of Mr. P.N. Ferstenberg, dean of the Antwerp diamond industry. The Ambassador and I then visited Rubens' home and the Cathedral of Our Lady, where Rubens' "Descent of the Cross" is on permanent view.

## Library of Congress

The following day I introduced VU Member of Parliament of Kortryk, Luc Van Steenkiste, to the Ambassador. She invited me for lunch at the residence in honor of the President of the Veterans of Foreign Wars.

I paid a courtesy visit to the newly appointed Bishop of Antwerp, Monsignor Godfried Danneels. He had come from humble origins in West Flanders. His theological studies proved to be a stepping stone to his nomination as Archbishop, and he is now Cardinal of Belgium.

August 14, 1978, the Royal Petroleum Belge (RPB), owned by Occidental Petroleum, closed down its operations, resulting in some union marches that were disruptive. Mr. Armand Hammer was concerned about the exhibit of his private paintings in Brussels which was to open in a few days. We recommended that the exhibit not take place. The RPB difficulties continued for a time and caused a general petroleum strike in Belgium.

August 22, Archie Bolster arrived at post to become the new Consul General. We worked together for about three years and were an excellent team serving US-Belgian interests. The next day we gave a reception at our home to introduce Archie and Anne to Belgian officials.

As consular officer, I was responsible for taking depositions, which were legal documents notarized by American consuls, and later introduced in US courts. These documents were usually requested by US lawyers on behalf of shipping companies in Antwerp. In early September I was also involved in a tedious, time consuming Court of Appeals case of an American citizen on a drug trafficking charge. The court decision finally brought the matter to a satisfactory conclusion. I was on close terms with Dr. A. Thiry, Director of the Antwerp prison, and also with the Reverend Christiaan Vonck, who was the Protestant chaplain at the penitentiary. At that time we also had a student from Louvain University imprisoned for drug possession.

## Library of Congress

On September 18, 1978, when President Carter mediated the successful Camp David accords between Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin and Anwar Sadat, of Egypt, we all received a lift. Any success story emanating from the White House helps us in our political contacts in the field because the prestige of the United States is at stake.

On October 2 the U.S.S. Furer sailed into the Port of Antwerp. October 7, the U.S.S. Francis Marion docked. I went aboard to see Lt. Self, and discussed some of the routine morale problems on board US Navy ships. We notarized many crew lists in Antwerp. I also solved a local dispute with Mrs. Peters, of the Domino bar, in Antwerp. Some GIs had caused damage to the bar and a financial settlement was made. I also went to Ghent to visit a US citizen who was in prison there. I talked with Director Swinnen about the case.

### The Egmont Accords

October 11, Prime Minister Leo Tindemans resigned in Parliament over a confrontation with Socialist Andr# Cools on constitutional questions resulting from the Regionalization Egmont Accords. Mr. Paul Van de Boeynants formed an interim government. King Baudouin wanted the government to examine the Articles of the Egmont Accords, which needed revision in Parliament. The Egmont Accords were the basis for setting up three autonomous political and cultural regions — one for Flanders, one for Wallonia, and another for the city of Brussels (where both Flemish and Walloons reside). Representatives of the three communities created mechanisms that would allow regional parliamentary power in each of the three areas without denying the Belgian central government in Brussels the right to act in matters of diplomacy, defense, and national issues, which affected all Belgian citizens. The Egmont Accords were finally implemented in the early 1980s and, to date, in Belgium, there are three autonomous political governments, which is a situation complex enough to confuse most foreign observers, but allows the linguistic Flemish and Walloon groups to fulfill their individual cultural identities.



## Library of Congress

Besides Ambassador Cox Chambers, Minister Counselor Arthur Olsen also expressed great interest in our job in Antwerp. They often called us and drove over for lunch. Some sensitive issues were ironed out before staff meetings at the Embassy on Fridays.

I was invited November 3 to the Concorde Club of Antwerp. Ambassador Cox Chambers was the guest of honor. Others present were: Baron Kronacker, Minister of State and head of the Belgian Tierlemont Sugar Refinery; Belgian Ambassador to the United States Mr. Le Bac; and Antwerp sculptor Willy Kreitz.

November 19, I was at the City Hall of Antwerp on the occasion of the opening of the academic year of the Antwerp Naval Academy. Professor Suykens spoke about port problems in the Third World.

I joined Consul General Bolster on a visit to Bell Telephone Company in Genk (Province of Antwerp). It had about 11,000 workers, and we were told that, because of the revolutionary technological changes taking place in the industry, they needed one engineer for every three workers.

December 5, Mr. Newlin, State Department Country Desk Officer for Benelux, stopped in to see me on his way to Luxembourg. We reviewed some aspects of Flemish politics and the parliamentary elections to be held in December. December 17, the Belgians went to the polls to elect new members of Parliament. The CVP held its own, but Flemish socialists lost some seats, VU (Flemish Nationalist party) suffered heavy losses, liberals in Flanders made some gains. The Belgian political spectrum looked more complicated than ever after the fall of the Tindemans II government.

On January 9, 1979, Wilfred Martens, president of the CVP (Catholic majority) party was appointed by the King as Formateur (a position which attempts to form the basis for a new government). At the time, Manu Ruys, who worked for the Flemish daily, De Standaard,

## Library of Congress

was optimistic about Martens' chances to form a new government. His predictions proved to be true.

My social life was a hectic one. There were no evenings that I was not invited out, but I was often at cultural events where I met political people who became solid contacts. Political and cultural events often intertwined.

The evening of December 18 was very foggy. We (employees of the Consulate) shuttled to Brussels to attend a Christmas dinner given by the Ambassador at the Chateau St. Anne. It was a great dance party, but because of the fog, the trip back was hazardous.

On January 15, I was asked to attend a press conference in Ghent, organized by the Eggermont Model firm. They introduced Eileen Ford, fashion show director of the Ford model office in New York. She had come to Belgium to interview some new model candidates. I got to know the challenges of her job over lunch.

In March I was a guest at the Rotary Club Academy, where Governor of Antwerp Mr. Andries Kinsbergen, Mayor M. Schroyens, and Attorney General Van Roeyland were present.

I traveled to Ostend to handle the Cope Estate case (Mr. Cope was a US citizen pilot who had died in England). His sister came to Ostend to settle his financial affairs. The US Consul uses its facilitative services to help out in such estate cases.

Belgian explorer Fons Oerlemans and his wife came to my office. He presented me with a copy of his book on his travels. I issued him a tourist visa to travel to the Bermuda Triangle. Quite often I would have US tourists who wanted to say hello to the American Consul. This happened in April when New Jersey Game Commission inspectors Dennis Furlong and D. Marrow visited.

## Library of Congress

On April 17, CVP Wilfred Martens formed a coalition government with the Socialists and the FDF.

### Consular Officers Meeting in Rome

On May 6, 1979, I flew to Rome to attend the Consular Officer's conference. It was good to be back in the Eternal City. Since I stayed at the hotel Dei Principe I was able to take a long walk through Parco Borghese, Via Veneto, where the US Embassy is located.

The next day, Barbara Watson, Assistant Secretary for Consular Affairs (1968-1974; 1977-1980), opened the conference. We got an overview of Italian politics by Ambassador Richard N. Gardner, and Ambassador Ronald D. Palmer spoke about personnel matters. In the evening I went to a meeting at St. Paul's American Episcopal Church.

We also had a briefing on citizenship services by Carmen Placido. Mr. Purcell and Ron Summerville, of Administration, were on hand to assist with problems in that area. We had the afternoon free. I visited Galleria Borghese where I saw beautiful Caravaggios, Rubens and sculptures. I also walked near Church Trinità del Monte. In the evening I attended a reception at the home of Counselor of Embassy Jim Riley.

I went to the Vatican to see the Last Judgment of Michelangelo. Pope John Paul II rode through St. Peter's Square in his jeep, where we could all see him. It was an impressive, emotional experience. My friend, Johannes-Maria, a Franciscan monk, who worked at the Vatican Office of the Propagation of the Faith, was correct that every diplomat should visit Rome because it is the cradle of civilization. Wherever one goes in Rome, one is reminded of Roman history and civilization, and its impact on contemporary times.

The next day I joined other employees at the American Embassy to greet First Lady Rosalynn Carter and her daughter, Amy. We met them in the courtyard, shaking hands

## Library of Congress

and exchanging pleasantries. In the evening I had a visit with my friend, Father Philip, in his convent on San Teodoro.

Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) and US Customs officials, in a closing briefing, made reference to pending plans between the INS and US Customs to cooperate more fully in combating illicit drug trafficking on the US-Mexican border, and the interception of drug shipments in the Caribbean.

On my return home we attended the famous folkloric parade, "Pageant of the Cat," in Ieper, West Flanders, a folkloric highlight for me. There I met Wilfred Martens, Prime Minister of Belgium, Karel Van Miert, President of the Flemish Socialist Party, and Mr. Hugo Schiltz, President of the Volksunie (Flemish Nationalist Party).

In May, I paid an official visit to Turnhout (near Antwerp). Mayor J. Proost received me at City Hall and showed me the Romanesque St. Peter's Church. I visited Carta Mundi, a factory that produces well known Belgian playing cards. Later on I met archivist Harry De Kok, who was in charge of history and cultural affairs.

I joined Deputy Chief of Mission Arthur Olsen and Consul General Bolster at the Memorial Day services at the US military cemetery in Waregem, West Flanders. It was a privilege to be present at this ceremony honoring our military heroes. Since Flanders was liberated by American and Canadian forces in World War II, the townspeople felt grateful and appreciated the visit by American diplomats.

### European Elections

The elections for the European parliament were the political highlight in June 1979. I had a chance to discuss the events with Senior Belgian CVP Senator Marcel Van de Wiele. The Senator said, "It was Europe's first exercise in macro politics." He also said that there was a consciousness of change and that this could be seen in the young voters as they

## Library of Congress

viewed the future of Europe. He listed creating jobs for younger workers as one of the priority items on the European agenda.

I was impressed by the his in-depth knowledge of world affairs. "The Third World will force us to stick together," he remarked, "because as they put restrictions on their resource allocations, the industrialized nations will have to adopt a common strategy of conservation."

Van de Wiele advocated a North-South dialogue that would eventually lead to a sort of Marshall Plan for the Third World. He believed that Belgium, because of its historic neutrality and linguistic heritage, would be able to look at global issues more dispassionately than France or West Germany.

June 22, I accompanied Ambassador Cox Chambers to the opening of the Rubens-Rembrandt etchings (from the Pierpont Morgan Library in New York) at the Antwerp Fine Arts Museum. Minister for Flemish Culture Rita de Backer and Socialist Member of Parliament Jos Van Elewyck also attended. Cultural events in Flanders usually drew huge crowds of tourists.

I handled details related to the trial of a US citizen at the Palace of Justice in Antwerp, and visited another family in Bruges regarding a child custody case. There was a lot of follow up with interested parties.

Ma## and I attended the Golden Jubilee dinner for Mr. P.N. Ferstenberg. A few days later we drove to Cologne, Germany, to visit the Gothic Cathedral, stopping in Bonn (capital of West Germany) and Aken to see the treasures of Charlemagne in a church with Byzantine features.

Home leave

## Library of Congress

In July, I flew to Washington, DC to begin home leave. After a few days of consultations at the State Department I took off for Toledo, Ohio, to visit the Museum of Fine Arts, and to the Detroit Institute of Art, which is filled with Flemish art. A few days later I returned to Washington, DC to revisit the Bernard Berenson wing at the National Gallery. Next, I went to New York to visit the historic Cloisters overlooking Hudson Bay. I enjoyed seeing many medieval art works. At the Pierpont Morgan Library I saw Michelangelo's drawings of the London Museum, and viewed a Gutenberg Bible on vellum. I also saw on display an original handwritten score of a Mozart symphony as well as works by Nicholas le Verdun and Hugo d'Oignies.

July 25, Ma## and Rebecca joined me on home leave. It was an opportunity to visit Disney World in Orlando and the Vizcaya Gardens in Miami. We were able to relax for a few days in West Palm Beach. It was a well-deserved vacation for us.

On my return from home leave, Jacques Hensard, consultant for the Texas-based Coastal States Gas Company, visited me at the Consulate to discuss details on the relocation of his firm's families in Antwerp, since it would be taking over the RBP (Occidental Petroleum) facilities there.

I was notified of the sudden death of Lloyd Davis, a famous American guitarist, at the Eurocrest Hotel. He belonged to the W. Jackson Quartet that was scheduled to appear in Middelheim Park in Antwerp. His manager asked me to handle the funeral arrangements. The same week I had to attend to the victims of a fatal car accident in Antwerp, in which an American pediatrician, Catherine Pike, traveling with her husband, was involved.

I received a call from CVP Member of Parliament Manu de Sutter, of Knokke-Heist, who briefed me on his International Visitor's Tour of the US He was impressed by our "open society."

## Library of Congress

I also met Socialist Member of Parliament Alfons Laridon, from whom I learned more about linguistic problems in Belgium. He was an ardent advocate of the pluralistic school concept (a socialist idea) that would bring an end to the bitter rivalries between the existing school systems, requiring independent infrastructures. "The socialists have been promoting this for years," he said, "but we doubted that the CVP, with its powerful Catholic power base, would ever cooperate."

On occasion, an American consul receives calls from alleged American citizens abroad. In some cases they cannot prove that they are American citizens. The consul has to use innate good judgment and experience. I had such a case when I was asked by Dr. Kriekelmans, Director of the Psychiatric Institute, in Lanaken (province of Limburg), to talk with a person who claimed to be a US citizen.

My political reporting became more demanding. As I broadened my social and political contacts in Flanders I met some promising young political leaders. One such man was Patrick Moenaert. We had a long talk in his office at the World Trade Center in Brussels. He was President of the CVP youth group and Press Attach# to Daniel Coens, State Secretary for Flemish Affairs. From him I learned that the CVP was too centralized. He worried that the Flemings represented 60% of the population and, in terms of substantive jobs, had only been allocated 52%. Moenaert felt that it was critical to have a better balance of employment between Flemings and Walloons. Patrick Moenaert has done well in politics. He was recently (1995) elected as CVP Mayor of Bruges.

President Carter's foreign policy problems intensified when he decided to reinforce the Marines in Guantanamo, Cuba. This was in response to the Soviet's posting of a brigade there.

On October 19, Consul General Bolster and I attended a reception honoring former Belgian Ambassador to the United States and Mrs. Willy Van Cauwelaert. Two days later I was asked to give an extensive talk on life in the US Foreign Service at Vlakanam, in

## Library of Congress

Bruges. Vlakanam is a powerful organization of Flemish-American and Canadian tourist groups promoting travel in the US.

### Iranian Hostage Crisis

November 4, 1979, we learned that our embassy in Iran had been overrun with violence, and over 50 of our American staff had been taken hostage. Ever since Ayatollah Khomeini had taken over power in Iran in February, 1979, the political balance of power in that country had shifted to the fundamentalists, who made anti-American overtures in public. Everyone in the foreign service became concerned about our security and personal safety. The hostage crisis at our Iran embassy changed our relations with that country, and the destiny of our foreign service personnel forever.

November 6, I flew to London to attend a conference on technical aspects of visa operations. It included several practical aspects of visa operations, and there was much constructive communication between American diplomats and foreign service nationals working in Great Britain. US Ambassador to London, Kingman Brewster, Jr. (April 1977-February 1981), made the opening remarks at the conference. He was, at that time, the President of Yale University. We received a special briefing by Don Beam and Norman Springer of the Visa office. We also learned that the State Department was drawing up plans for extra protection for diplomats and embassies overseas. Embassies, in particular, were being reinforced and additional security personnel were hired to implement this new policy. During my stay in London I visited an exhibit of 17th century Venetian paintings at the National Gallery of Art and the Courtauld Institute Galleries near London University.

November 21, we learned that the American Embassy, in Islamabad (northwestern Pakistan), had been attacked. This latest terrorist act increased our concerns and made us aware of the dangers of working in the foreign service. We became more diligent in protecting our posts and families.



## Library of Congress

A few days later I attended the opening of the 1979-80 school year of the Antwerp Marine Academy. Professor Hacquaert, of Ghent, and Mr. C. Van Avermaet, of the Ministry of Defense, were also guests. Marcel Poppe, Secretary General of the Belgian Ministry of Transport spoke about the Belgian Merchant Marine in a changing world.

November 29, I met Frank Swaelen, a prominent CVP member of Parliament, who later became the Belgian Minister of Defense. He is currently the President of the Belgian Senate.

I received a telephone call December 6 from Deputy Chief of Mission Minister Arthur Olsen, who was departing the Consulate. He expressed his appreciation for the work I did. I was fortunate to have worked with him and I enjoyed the same confidence from his successor.

I also had to return to Bruges to attend a court hearing regarding a custody case at the correctional court. Judge Casterman and Attorney Micholt were present.

December 17, I was a guest of Andries Vandenabeele, of Bruges, at a dinner of International Protection of Historic Buildings (ECOMOS), in Louvain. I was seated across from Flemish Minister of Culture Rita De Backer, and also spoke with Professor Jean Barthelemy, of the University of Mons. Minister De Backer spoke of the necessity to protect the historic Flemish towns and small villages. I also met Mr. Le Maire, Professor of Architecture at the University of Louvain. A few days later I was a guest of Professor and Mrs. Barthelemy at their home in Mons (capital of the province of Hainaut).

December 20, we attended an Embassy Christmas party at the Hilton Hotel in Brussels, hosted by Ambassador Anne Cox Chambers.

The New Year brought some bad tidings. The Soviet Union invaded and occupied Afghanistan. This compounded an already tense situation in the Near East. American diplomats had been held hostage for 45 days at our Embassy in Tehran, Iran. President

## Library of Congress

Carter continued to appeal for their release, and many diplomatic attempts were made by other countries as well. The American government used its good offices with countries such as Morocco, Algeria, and most countries of the NATO alliance, to act as intermediaries with the Khomeini regime in Tehran.

January 12, 1980, I paid an official consular visit to the city of Zwevegem, West Flanders. CVP Member of Parliament Francine De Meulenaere opined that regionalization proposals made by the Martens government would not work, and was skeptical that anything could be worked out between the Flemish and Francophone parties. Then, on January 16, Prime Minister Martens fired the ministers of the Francophone Party (FDF). The government was at an impasse. It was not before January 23 that the Martens II government began to focus again on economic and social problems.

January 24, famed Italian lion trainer Fusinati came to my office to obtain a visa to the United States.

Our new Deputy Chief of Mission and Mrs. Edward Killham came to Antwerp for a visit and a get acquainted meeting. Mr. Habib, desk officer of Benelux (Belgium, Holland and Luxembourg), in the State Department, also came to see us. These visits were for briefings on local political conditions.

In March a riot broke out in Voerstreek (Province of Limburg) over linguistic differences. Belgian Minister of the Interior Gramme was blamed in the press. That month Ma#t# went to Supreme Headquarters, Allied Powers, Europe (SHAPE), where she accepted a NATO support activity job.

On March 26, the Belgian Senate fell one vote short of the two-thirds majority required for implementation of the proposed regionalization (Egmont Accords).

## Library of Congress

March 31, I called on Mayor Thienpont of Oudenaarde. He showed me the City Hall, followed by a two hour meeting with veteran CVP leader P. Verroken. He said that there was a political rivalry between Leo Tindemans and Prime Minister Wilfred Martens.

Two days later, Prime Minister Martens resigned. However, King Baudouin then appointed him as caretaker Prime Minister while Socialist Willy Claes, minister of Economic Affairs was appointed as Formateur (the person who selects the best candidate to form a new government).

April 4, Consul General Bolster presented my 20-year length of service award in his office. My daughter Rebecca was also invited.

Following a break in diplomatic relations between Iran and the US, President Carter ordered all visas for Iranians rescinded. From time to time, Iranians passed through Antwerp seeking to obtain tourist visas, in which cases we had to receive prior approval from Washington. This was already the routine for Third World nationals seeking visas at our Consulate General.

April 17, Wilfred Martens was selected as the candidate to form a new coalition government with the CVP, BSP and PVV parties. Two days later, King Baudouin and Queen Fabiola visited Washington, DC on the occasion of Belgium's 150th anniversary.

I visited an American citizen being held in the Antwerp jail on drug charges. I also saw another American citizen at Merksplas penitentiary. I always sought immediate access to jailed US citizens to make sure they received adequate and immediate legal assistance, and were able to communicate with family and friends.

April 24, we learned of the tragic, abortive attempt to rescue the US hostages in Iran. It did not boost our foreign policy image in Belgium. Secretary of State Cyrus Vance resigned

## Library of Congress

over this. He had disagreed with the inner group of advisors to President Carter, who had recommended the plan to rescue the hostages.

I met with Marc Olivier, CVP member of Parliament of Kortrijk. He was 70% sure Martens would succeed in the regionalization in both Flanders and Wallonia. Marc gave the Martens III government one year, given the average lifespan of coalition governments in Belgium. He also expressed regret over the failed rescue plan. That same day I issued a tourist visa to Dr. Bo Lav, deputy minister of Agriculture of Burma.

Consul General Bolster and I attended an American Legion dinner in Roeselare, West Flanders, where we received a certificate of appreciation from the Legion for consular services rendered to their members and veterans. Andre Noreillie had established a good rapport between the American Legion, the US Embassy, and the US Consulate General. Many veterans benefitted from his dedication.

April 30, 1980 was my third anniversary at the Antwerp Consulate. Ma#t# and I were invited for dinner at the home of Commissioner of the Port of Antwerp and Mrs. Jacques Vinckier. We remained good friends throughout the years. They both passed away in the early 1990s, which was, to us a great personal loss.

Former Consul General John Heimann returned to Belgium to take up an assignment as Counselor for Economic Affairs at the US Embassy, Brussels. John knew the political scenes and economics in Belgium well and tried to keep the American Consulate General in Antwerp open as long as possible. Consul General Bolster and I recommended against closure throughout the late 1970s and early 1980s. We succeeded, in part, as a short-term missile program was put in place in Belgium, a move that signaled the end of the Cold War.

May 14, I attended a reception at the home of the Consul General of Argentina, Alberto V. Salgueiro, and in the evening I talked with the Mexican Consul General, Mr. Salcedo.

## Library of Congress

Archie Bolster and I attended the Memorial Day services at Flanders Field, in Waregem. General Nichols, of the Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers, Europe (SHAPE), was present.

### Reaction to US Cruise Missiles (TNF) in Europe

I had a long meeting June 1 with George Derieuw, National Secretary ABVV/FETB and Secretary of Flemish "Interregional." (Note: Abbreviations above refer to Flemish and Walloon terms for Socialist and Christian unions.) I was particularly interested in his views on TNF (deployment of US cruise missiles in Western Europe). He said that, in spite of the fact that American prestige had declined after the loss of Iran, he favored immediate production and early deployment of US cruise missiles to counterbalance Soviet SS-20 rocketry. "The Soviets are sure of their present nuclear superiority and will not let this opportunity to maintain their superiority slip away through compromise," he said. When I asked him whether regionalization would succeed, he replied that ABVV would accept Brussels as a region, but not on an equal footing with Flanders and Wallonia.

On June 6, King Baudouin delivered an address at the occasion of the 150th anniversary of Belgium. I also visited with famous Belgian heart specialist and surgeon, Dr. Jacques Bleyn, who assisted me in bringing an Afghan refugee to Belgium for a kidney transplant. Dr. Bleyn said that he had worked with Dr. Michael DeBakey in Houston.

In June, I attended a reception at the Belgian-American Club in honor of American author Joyce Carol Oates and her husband. They expressed great interest in all aspects of life in the foreign service. Later Rebecca and I traveled through France. We stopped in Rouen where we visited the gothic cathedral. We also stopped at the Basilica of St. Teresa of Lisieux and the Cathedral of St. Maurits in Angers, famous for its precious woodwork in the nave and its stained glass windows. In the chateau of Angers we admired the tapestries of the Apocalypse (Mille Fleurs). We then drove to Royan and spent a few days with Rebecca's maternal grandparents in Le Verdon sur Mer.

## Library of Congress

In July, I drove alone to Toulouse and Albi to visit the Toulouse Lautrec museum. I visited the Church of Saint Cecile in Albi. On the way back to Belgium I saw the Romanesque church of Cahors and Chateaux of Chenonceaux and Amboise.

I represented the Consulate General at the French Independence celebration at the French Consulate General in Antwerp. At a lunch for Marcel Colla, socialist alderman of Deurne (Antwerp), and member of the European Parliament, he stated that he shared Karl Van Miert's (President of the Socialist Party) and W. Tobback's (floor leader) opposition to the TNF. He conceded that his party was also committed to spending more for social legislation, and that this would not be "a negligible factor in wanting to delay TNF." Colla was quick to point out that the latest American position on possible talks with the Soviets on strategic nuclear weapons proved that the Belgian Socialist Party's position was a sanguine one.

I assumed charge of the Consulate General from July 17 through July 19, 1980, and met Mr. La Fosse, new director of Customs, who had replaced K.F. Hendrick. Whenever Consul General Archie Bolster left the Consul district, I assumed charge.

For Belgium's Independence Day celebration I attended a "Te Deum" ceremony in St. Peter and Paul Cathedral in Ostend.

When a terrorist group leader attacked a Jewish children's school on Lamorinie Street, in Antwerp, there was widespread outrage by the Jewish community, and people of Antwerp. Extra security was posted in the Jewish district to guard against further violence.

### Visit to West Berlin

August 1, I traveled to West Berlin. I first drove to Helmstedt where I boarded a British military train and rode about three hours through Communist East Germany. The depressed economic and social conditions behind the Iron Curtain revealed the stark contrast between West and East Germany. From the train I could see that the people

## Library of Congress

in East Germany looked poorly dressed and were living in shabby public housing. I saw many families working in the fields in order to make ends meet.

In West Berlin I checked into the Harnack House, a government guest house where many US government officials usually stayed. When I later walked through the center of West Berlin, I was amazed by its modern buildings and infrastructure, and attractive city parks. Our train stopped a few minutes in the city of Nuremberg, famous for its World War II trials on atrocities. This, too, looked run down and depressing.

During my visit in West Berlin I went to the Dahlem Museum, where I enjoyed seeing works by German painter Lucas Cranach (1472-1553) and Michelangelo Caravaggio (1565-1609). In my opinion, they were the best of the collection. We also visited the Berlin wall at Checkpoint Charlie, a reminder of tyranny versus democracy. There I could see many flower beds, crosses, and mementos honoring the thousands of East Germans who jumped the Berlin Wall and were killed by East German guards in the process.

August 5, 1980, the Belgian Parliament voted on the implementation of a historic regionalization program for Flanders and Wallonia. It was a great feat for Prime Minister Martens' III administration. This would forever change the political make up of Belgium.

When Joseph F. Konkommer, Consul General of Israel and prominent Jewish leader in Antwerp, passed away, the city of Antwerp came to a standstill for a few moments. He had done much for the Jewish community in Antwerp. The Antwerp community organized memorial services for him.

August 26, I was invited by my friend Frank Lerno, director general of the Coulier tank and tractor trailer company in Hamme. His firm transported products to Eastern Europe, including the Soviet Union. He was a prominent young business leader, who had quickly reached the pinnacle of managerial success.

## Library of Congress

During my tour as US Consul in Flanders (1977-1981) I was often asked how it felt to come back to my native Belgium as a representative of the US government, and if I had any mixed feelings about Belgium and my adopted land. It was easy for me to reply to this. Since becoming an American citizen I have felt a deep sense of loyalty and gratitude to America for what it represents as a nation and to millions of people from other lands. As my responsibilities in the consular field increased I became more aware of the similarities of human problems in all parts of the world. Returning to Flanders as US Consul was a great honor bestowed upon me by the US government, because of the important role the US played in Europe and in world affairs. I was proud that I belonged to the foreign service of a nation that had given dynamic leadership in the world, and represented a force for democracy and freedom.

September 12, a military coup in Turkey further destabilized the political balance in the Near East, greatly increasing political uncertainties.

The following day, I had what would be my last meeting with my friend CVP Member of Parliament Daniel Coens, of Bruges (he passed away in 1993). During lunch in a quaint Flemish restaurant, "Waterput," in Oostkerke, near Damme, we discussed TNF (deployment of Cruise Missiles) and the effect on the Martens III government. I learned that the Socialists would likely use the TNF issue, and not socioeconomic issues, as an excuse to leave the Martens III coalition. "Whichever party leaves the CVP will continue its responsibilities; we are the only Christian party in Europe," he said. We also touched on the topic of the Port of Zeebrugge (to the north of Bruges). He defended his government's decision to expand the entry port of Zeebrugge. "Someday it will be used as a major military port by NATO," he said. Coens felt that if Zeebrugge did not play that role, Duinkerke or Rotterdam would. Coens predicted that there would be an independent Flemish executive Council in the near future and also autonomy for Brussels (not full autonomy, such as for Flanders and Wallonia) but under the protective umbrella of the National government. He confided in me that someday he would hold the job which



## Library of Congress

Minister Rita De Backer now had (Minister of Flemish Culture), and that she would like to finish her political career as Mayor of Antwerp after the political and linguistic fusion in 1982. It so happened that my friend, Leona Deti#ge, who was alderwoman for cultural affairs in Antwerp is now filling that mayoral position.

September 18, a war between Iran and Iraq erupted which would further disrupt the Middle East picture. Although the US played a neutral role in the war, the Iran-Iraq conflict did not make it easier for President Carter to obtain the release of our hostages in Iran.

Rebecca and I attended the opening of the Flemish opera season in Antwerp with a performance of Wagner's Lohengrin.

I paid an official visit to the city of Aalst (80,000 inhabitants), where Mayor Louis D'Hasseleer offered me a beautiful pewter plate with the crest of the city. He was one of the PVV (Liberal Party) leaders in Flanders, and very proud of his Flemish heritage. In his office there was a display of Flemish chests, which were masterpieces. He also took me to the St. Martinus Church, which is a historic landmark.

Since the Nixons had left, Jim Minyard joined our staff as Commercial Officer.

October 4, 1980, the Martens III government fell.

October 6, the Consulate General relocated to the Rubens Center, 5 Nationale Street, in Antwerp. Ambassador Chambers came to cut the ribbon at the official opening of our new Consulate General. I was also notified of my promotion to FSSO-3 with the rank of US Consul. Commander Andr# Noreillie, of the American Legion, came to present Consul General Archie Bolster, Ed Carnas (my Consular assistant), and myself, medals for meritorious service.

I visited a special exhibit of Breughel paintings at the Brussels Museum of Fine Arts.

## Library of Congress

October 17, I represented the Consulate General at a military reception at Kallo.

Prime Minister Wilfred Martens formed the Martens IV government, with Frank Swaelen acting as Defense Minister and Daniel Coens as Minister for Economic Assistance.

October 24, I attended a reception of American Field Service candidates at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Serrien, in Aerselare. We had a reception at our home for 60 official guests, including CVP Member of Parliament Steverlynck, Marcel Colla, member of the European Parliament, and Mr. and Mrs. P.N. Ferstenberg. Guest lists and alternate guest lists were prepared weeks ahead by Jose Stoffels, my staff assistant.

### My Meeting With Luc De Haene

On October 29, I met and talked with Jean Luc De Haene, Chief of the Cabinet of Prime Minister Wilfred Martens, at the Prime Minister's residence in Brussels. Mr. De Haene is currently the Prime Minister in Belgium. I was asked by the Embassy to get a feel for his views on the regionalization plans in Belgium and on the official position of the Martens IV government on TNF. It was a crucial assignment for me. He reassured me of the Martens III cabinet's official statement of support for TNF — if East-West negotiations proved unproductive. He told me that the incoming Reagan administration might force a decision on TNF. Prime Minister De Haene was very careful not to say anything negative about the socialists as coalition partners. He was of the opinion that despite the Socialists (including Karl Van Miert and W. Tobback) advocacy of their pro-disarmament policies, they were not necessarily to be interpreted as anti-American.

Jean Luc De Haene was born in Bruges and we reminisced on our common Flemish roots.

On October 30, the Consul General and I had lunch at the Circle Royal Philatasc with Judge Van Camp and Raymond Smith, Benelux desk officer.

## Library of Congress

In early November, we attended a consular dinner at the home of Mr. and Mrs. P. N. Ferstenberg.

November 12, Socialist Mayor of Bruges, Frank Van Acker, received me at City Hall. We had a one-hour exchange about political conditions in Belgium and Tobback-Van Miert's opposition to US rocketry modernization in Belgium. Van Acker, unlike his socialist counterparts, took a more centrist and moderate position on the cruise missiles issue, and felt that a strong military posture in Western Europe was to NATO's advantage. My friend, Dries Vandenberghe, convinced me that Mayor Van Acker and Economics Minister Willy Claes followed the traditional socialist line, but wanted Belgium to live up to its NATO commitments.

November 20, Virginia Schafer, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Operations in the State Department, visited our post.

I was also invited to a Flemish-Japanese evening at Rubens House. Besides the Japanese Consul General and German Consul Johann Stenglein, I met Mr. Fleerackers, President of the Rubens House, who was also a member of the Constitutional Committee on linguistic problems.

In late November I was received by Monsignor. Paul Vandenberghe, Bishop of Antwerp. We talked about the tense East-West relations. He felt that the US should not use a grain embargo as a weapon against the USSR. "Too many poor people are affected by this," he stated. He added that there were more effective ways in the psychological warfare area to counteract those who violate international law and human rights.

I was the guest of Dries Vandenberghe, President of ICOMOS, at the Palace of Congress in Brussels. Prince Albert (now King Albert II) of Belgium presided over the event. Besides Minister for Flemish affairs, Gaston Geens, I met some diplomats, such as the Chargé d'Affaires of the Embassy of Iraq.

## Library of Congress

A few weeks later I met Andre Goossens, President of ACV (West Flanders Christian Union). He was convinced that the Martens IV government would be successful in clearing the economic austerity (such as a salary freeze) plan through Parliament, regardless of the Unions' objections. On the proposed US missiles plan in Western Europe, he said that Belgium had no choice but to fully cooperate with NATO's modernization requirements.

December 30, 1980, I paid an official visit to J. Van Roy, Mayor of the City of Mechelen (Malines). We talked for an hour in his office about US-Belgian ties. First Alderman Albert Stiers and Frank Geys, of the Municipal Council, joined us.

January 2, 1981, Deputy Chief of Mission Ed Killham came to the Consulate General. Jim Minyard and I prepared an informal lunch for him, which gave us an opportunity to go over some Consular business.

January 16, Ambassador Cox Chambers gave a farewell party at the residence for the Embassy staff. Many tributes to her were given for her work in improving US-Belgian relations during her tenure as US Envoy to Belgium.

There was an academic session at the Courthouse of Turnhout (old city in the Province of Antwerp) in January where my friend, Harry De Kok, the city's archivist, presented his new book on Turnhout. It was an occasion to mix with local townspeople and officials, such as the Judge of the First Instance and First Alderman Dademans. It was in the small towns of Flanders that I learned about the intricacies of Flemish politics.

January 20, Ronald Reagan became the 40th American President. His inaugural message stressed a revival of the American economy. In international affairs he advocated a strong military buildup in Western Europe to force the Soviet Union to negotiate on nuclear arms cuts. Reagan also stressed developing strong relations with Latin America and new plans to combat international terrorism. President Carter received his farewell gift: Iran freed the American hostages — ending a painful chapter in international diplomacy.

## Library of Congress

January 23, I was lunch guest of Luc Martens, Director of the Training Institute of the CVP Catholic Party (IPOVO), which trains young political leaders. Martens worked closely with former Prime Minister CVP President Leo Tindemans (who is also in the Christian EVP Party of Europe), and gave me an overview of the Belgian political scene. He said that Parliamentarians were often briefed by IPOVO before they made policy statements on domestic and international affairs. On the anti-cruise missile stand by some members of the Belgian Socialist Party, he felt that there was some change of heart, of late, due to the Soviet Union's policies in Afghanistan and Poland, and that Western European policies of detente with the Soviets needed to be reviewed. I felt that Luc Martens would play an important role in Flemish regionalization politics.

January 28, 1981, I received a call from former Belgian Ambassador to Washington, Mr. Caulewaert (who is retired in Antwerp). He made a concerted appeal to the US because Armed Forces Radio Network (AFRN) had been jammed in Europe these past days. The ambassador claimed that the Soviets were responsible for this as an attempt to cover up their interference in Poland. I told the ambassador that I would raise this issue with the embassy in Brussels.

I visited someone in Zolder, a province of Limburg, who was a potential witness in a denaturalization case, and required a statement in front of a consular officer. In spite of my urging him to cooperate, I was unable to obtain the information needed to forward the case to Washington.

February 21, I had a meeting with CVP Member of Parliament Senator Roger Windels, who expressed keen interest in stimulating small businesses.

On March 3, Mrs. Murdoch, an Internal Revenue Service representative, came to the Consulate General to assist American citizens with the filing of their income tax returns.

## Library of Congress

Since Antwerp is only a short distance from Brussels, I visited the Horta Museum there. It is a perfect replica of a turn of the century (art nouveau) house. I had lunch with Mayor J. Proost, of Turnhout, and with Luc Martens, of IPOVO. He gave me a feeling that the split within the CVP party between the Martens and Tindemans factions could lead to a fall of the Martens IV government.

March 30, 1981, President Reagan was shot following a talk before the American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organization (AFL-CIO) at the Hilton in Washington. There was consternation throughout the entire world. We were worried who would handle foreign policy in the interim. Fortunately, the President recovered and went on with his great goals of national security. Consul Johann Stenglein, of the German Consulate in Antwerp, called me to express his concern about President Reagan's condition.

Discussions between his coalition government (Martens IV) and the Unions over indexation led to the fall of the Martens government. The Prime Minister submitted his resignation to the King. Around that time I traveled to Ostend to attend a lunch for the new Mayor, Julien Goekint.

April 6, Belgian Finance Minister Mark Eyskens (son of former Prime Minister Gaston Eyskens) was appointed Prime Minister. He promised to support the same platform as that of the Martens IV government. Mr. Vandenputte, former Governor General of the Belgian National Bank, replaced him as Belgian Finance Minister.

April 14, Ambassador Thomas O. Enders, a permanent representative to the United States Mission of the European Community (USEC), was appointed as Assistant Secretary of State for Latin American Affairs (Ambassador Enders passed away in 1996), and former actor John Gavin became the US Ambassador to Mexico.

## Library of Congress

VAKA Belgium and Holland were anti-Junta groups participating in marches in front of our Consulate and at SHAPE and NATO Headquarters in Brussels, in protest against the Junta dictatorship in El Salvador. Antwerp police increased security for us.

April 24, I attended an evening concert by the Seaford High School Band of New York, at General Motors Auditorium, in Antwerp. Director Mansel asked me to address the students following their great performance. The following day I went to Antwerp City Hall where a reception was held by the City Council for the Seaford Band. They gave us another performance on the main square. Socialist Alderman Posson and Colonel Lauwers (Councilman) hosted the event. There was always wide coverage of cultural events in the Flemish press.

April 26, Consul General Bolster and I attended the annual dinner for the veterans of Flanders Field Post II at the Rodenbach Restaurant, in Roeselare, West Flanders. We were presented farewell gifts (both Archie and I would depart the post in the summer). Many local officials attended, as did acting Mayor Van Eekhout.

On May 1, 1981, Minister of Flemish Culture Rita De Backer and I met again — this time at a farewell dinner by the Tyle Uilenspiegel Club at the Luchtbal in Antwerp. It was a typical Breughel feast. Minister De Backer presented medals pro musica to Mr. Mansel and his colleagues. Minister De Backer pointed out that we have more private support for the endowment of the arts in the US. She was aware that the high quality of our museums was due to the fact that American financiers had invested in many cultural projects. "This was not the case in Flanders," she said, but mentioned that Italy had similar private investments. During the dinner I had a chance to talk with Mr. J. De Boeck, a representative with Sabena (Belgian Airlines).

May 5, US Secretary of State General Alexander Haig, paid a courtesy call on King Baudouin of Belgium and Minister of Foreign Affairs Ferdinand Nothomb. He also visited

## Library of Congress

NATO Headquarters. Having worked at NATO, General Haig's theme during the visit was devoted to issues of European security.

On May 10, Socialist Francois Mitterrand defeated Valery Giscard d'Estaing for the Presidency of France with 52% of the votes. Inflation, unemployment and the austere personality of Giscard were cited as reasons for his victory. The attempted assassination of world leaders was repeated on May 13 when Pope John Paul II was shot by a Turkish national in St. Peter's Square. Both President Reagan and the Pope are victims of an increasing terrorism war.

Although Archie and I had already said goodbye to some of our good Flemish friends and contacts, we kept in close touch with political developments in Flanders, and President Reagan's decision to introduce cruise missiles in Western Europe.

May 14, Archie and I attended the opening of a "Painters of the West" exhibit at the Fine Arts in Brussels. The works came from the Anschutz collection in Colorado. We saw the best of Frederic Remington, George Inness and George Catlin. Charg# d'Affaires and Mrs. Edward Killham were also present. (When Ambassador Cox Chambers had departed the post, Mr. Killham was put in charge of the embassy.)

Archie and I were guests at a dinner at Oestrich House (Bank of Paris and the Netherlands) on the Meir in honor of Delaware Governor Pierre S. Du Pont IV. I was seated at a table with the Secretary of State of Delaware, Mr. Kemtin, and also with the Consul General of the Netherlands, Mr. Van Der Kraan. Governor du Pont spoke of the need to do away with indexing and excess taxation on industries. "This is a new era to produce more and create jobs," he stated. He encouraged cities like Antwerp to do business directly with individual states, such as Delaware, to avoid the complex federal bureaucracy in Washington. The dinner had been organized by the Flemish Economic Union and European Transport following the Governor's visit with the King.



## Library of Congress

May 24, 1981, I represented the Consul General at the annual Memorial Day services at the American Military Cemetery of World War I servicemen, in Waregem, West Flanders. I accompanied the Charg# d'Affaires Ed Killham to the monument on the main square in Waregem and then to the cemetery. Although the weather was bad, Air Force planes stationed in West Germany flew over the ceremony site as is the custom for Memorial Day services. Afterwards we attended a reception where I talked with Mayor Coucke of Waregem; Van Dierendonck, President of the Overseas Cemeteries; Mathys, president of the ceremony, and representatives of the Belgian military forces.

Later in the month I attended the opening of etchings by Karl Roelands at the Plantin Moretus Museum in Antwerp. At the exhibit ceremony I talked with Eugene Dhont, Deputy Commissioner of the Foreign Police, in Antwerp; Mathilde Schroyens, Mayor of Antwerp; and Dr. Leon Voet, curator of the museum. I was also interviewed by Editor Jean Herreboudt, of the Brugsch Handelsblad, a weekly in Bruges. It covered my four and a half years in Antwerp.

On June 1, Charles Price II, of Kansas City, was appointed by President Reagan to replace Anne Cox Chambers as American Ambassador to Belgium. On June 10, Mr. Harry De Kok, of Turnhout, came to see me to present his second book about the city. I was also invited for a farewell luncheon by Colonel Willy Van Geet at the headquarters of the Mobile Brigade, in Wilryk, near Antwerp. I saw the brigade installation and museum, and we reminisced on our contacts over the past four years.

### Final Days in Antwerp

Charg# d'Affaires Ed Killham hosted a farewell luncheon for Consul General Bolster and myself at his residence in Brussels. Archie and I also went to the art exhibit of Flemish painter Gustaaf Van De Woestyne at the Museum of Fine Arts, in Antwerp. It was there that I met the son of Gustaaf, who is also a painter.

## Library of Congress

On 16 June Consul General Bolster and I received Reverend Christiaan Vonck, Chaplain of the Antwerp prison, and presented him a certificate of appreciation for his extraordinary services to American citizens in the Antwerp penitentiary.

June 19, I had lunch with CVP Member of Parliament Marc Olivier, of Kortryk. In the evening I was the guest of honor at the Single Music Hall for the 30th Anniversary of the "Strangers" music group of Antwerp. Afterwards, at a reception at the Crest Hotel, I sat at the table of honor with the wife of the Governor of Antwerp, Mrs. Kinsbergen, Minister of State and Mrs. Frans Grootjans (of the PVV Flemish liberal party); and Mr. Strielings, Manager of the Nieuwe Gazet, an Antwerp daily.

In preparation for my onward assignment to Tijuana, we moved to the Theater Hotel, in Antwerp. In the evening I gave the commencement address at the graduation ceremony of the European University, in Antwerp. My remarks were about preparing business managers for the future. John Wells, Director of the University, hosted dinner.

June 25, I attended the farewell reception for German Vice Consul Siegfried Rapp at his home in Ekeren.

June 30, I addressed students at the Middle School of the Eucharistic Heart, in Essen (Province of Limburg), who had been hosts to American students of Oak Lawn High School, in Chicago.

On July 2, I went to the city of Ieper, where Mayor De Hem received me at City Hall. He had organized a farewell reception for me. It was a day I will long remember. We said goodbye to Jim and Peggy Minyard at their home in Brasschaat.

There was a farewell reception and Independence Day buffet at the residence of Consul General Bolster. Our new Ambassador to Belgium, Charles Price, came to meet us.

## Library of Congress

Ma#t# and I were guests at the home of Antwerp artist Gaston Roelands. He is a well known contemporary Belgian painter who had first-hand knowledge of Mexican landscapes. He told us about his many trips to Mexico and exhibits in European capitals. Assistant Commissioner Eugene and Mrs. Dhont also attended the farewell dinner. Before leaving Belgium I said goodbye to my friends Robert and Christiane Fonteyne, Gerard and Monique Pintelon, Florentina Van Riet Janssens, Ivo and Eveline Van De Weyer, and many other friends.

On July 11, 1981, I left Antwerp for Washington via Paris.

### CHAPTER XIV

On the US-Mexican Border: Tijuana, Baja California

The State Department required a physical prior to transferring to Tijuana. During this home leave-orientation period I also met with John Barnett in the Office of Personnel, and with Consul Joanne Moates, who had worked in Tijuana. Mr. Ferris, a computer expert in the Department's Visa Office, briefed me on their plans. "The Consulate General in Tijuana would be completely computerized during my three years of duty there," he said. When I spoke by phone with Consul Lloyd DeWitt, in Tijuana, he confirmed this plan and he said he was looking forward to having me on his staff.

I also briefed Thomas Gewecke, the newly assigned Consul General to Antwerp. Tom had just finished a tour in Caracas. This was a typical briefing-debriefing in the State Department's Foreign Service Lounge, where foreign service personnel often come and go.

At that time, President Reagan and Mexican President Jos# Lopez Portillo met in Washington. Mexican Foreign Minister Jorge Casta#eda accompanied the Mexican president. It was at this occasion that President Reagan proposed his Caribbean economic development plan and also a new global policy for Central America. The

## Library of Congress

Mexican president promised his country's intervention with Russian leaders to curtail arms shipments to Central America.

On July 20, 1981, President Reagan attended the Economic Summit in Ottawa. He remained firm on fighting inflation, and was committed to keeping interest rates high in order to keep the US dollar strong and help our foreign policy posture abroad. Reagan's communication skills contributed to his ultimate goal of undermining Communism in Europe. Without his determination to bolster military strength in Western Europe and to placing cruise missiles in NATO countries to counterbalance Soviet missile strength, the Soviet demise might have been long delayed.

In August I was invited to dinner with my good friends Bill and Inge Anderson. Foreign Service inspector Herbert Schultz was also a guest.

Before leaving Washington I went to see the George Catlin Collection at the Museum of American Art. These are treasures of Indian life and culture. I also visited my friend, Frank Barrett, in Philadelphia. He showed me many churches, as well as the Rodin and Franklin Institutes. Frank also introduced me to his family.

On August 24, I began an intensive Spanish course at the Foreign Service Institute. This would equip me with Spanish language skills to deal with the big influx of legal and illegal immigrants in Tijuana.

It was also a time to familiarize myself with current political and cultural events in Mexico. Vice President George Bush attended the Independence Day celebrations in Mexico City. At the Foreign Service Institute, former Ambassador Larry Pezzulo, who was President Carter's emissary during the Sandinista government in Nicaragua, gave us an overview of Central American political reality. I knew Ambassador Pezzulo well from my days in the cultural affairs section of CU/ARA (American Republics).

## Library of Congress

A genuine rapprochement appeared to be taking place between the US and Mexico during the early months of the Reagan administration. Mexican officials began to hold trade talks with their counterparts in the US Department of Commerce. Mexico wanted to trade more with the US and other countries and there was talk of Mexico becoming part of GATT (General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade) in the future.

September 22, Miguel de la Madrid was nominated by Mexican President Lopez Portillo to be the PRI (Mexico's majority party) candidate for the July 4, 1982, presidential elections. There was no serious political opposition to de la Madrid's candidacy.

On October 6, 1981, Egyptian President Anwar Sadat was assassinated. It was a heavy blow to the United States. He had made a historic breakthrough with Israel that helped ease tensions in the Middle East. Without Sadat and Prime Minister Begin war in that region would have been likely.

On October 18, US-born Greek socialist leader Andreas Papandreou won the general elections in Greece and formed a new government. Greece and Turkey were a part of NATO and our allies against communism, but the issue of Cyprus had caused tensions between the two countries. Our even-handed diplomacy did not always keep the tensions between them from flaring up, but our NATO bases in both countries were, and are, vital to the security of the alliance in Europe.

October 19, President Francois Mitterrand of France and President Reagan attended the Bicentennial celebration in Yorktown, Virginia. President Reagan referred to France's contributions to the success of the American Revolution against the British.

President Reagan's presence at the North-South Summit in Cancun, Mexico, received positive coverage in the international media. It improved his image in Latin America.

Cross Country Trip

## Library of Congress

My family and I left for our cross country car trip to California. The first day we drove through the Blue Ridge and Appalachian mountains of Virginia and Tennessee. We made a stop in Nashville to see the architectural reproduction of the Parthenon and President Andrew Jackson's house (the Hermitage). On November 1, we drove through Memphis and crossed the Mississippi, Tennessee and Arkansas Rivers. I found Arkansas and Tennessee to be very scenic.

In Oklahoma City we saw the Historical Association which houses original documents of Indian settlements and American Indian culture. It also exhibits a fine collection of artifacts of the Cherokee Indians and the Indian alphabet. This is one of the best museums of American Indian history. We also visited the Art Museum at Oklahoma State University, in Norman.

We were lucky to have good weather and so, on November 3, we drove through Amarillo, Texas, and spent overnight in Santa Fe, New Mexico. It is a dream city for painters and artists. Its warm climate and Spanish-Indian architecture offers an ambiance for creative work. We also drove to Taos and St. Miguel Mission, which is the oldest church in the United States.

On November 6, we drove to Albuquerque and saw the campus of the University of New Mexico. Afterwards, we drove through Navajo Indian country and saw the beautiful petrified forest park, as well as Quemado. We arrived in Flagstaff, Arizona the next day. We enjoyed the Grand Canyon, then drove on to Las Vegas via Boulder City and the impressive Hoover Dam. Las Vegas, and nightspots such as Caesar's Palace, met my expectations.

After a long drive through the Mojave desert we finally arrived in San Bernardino, California. The next day we checked into a motel in Imperial Beach, California, where we stayed for three months before we found permanent housing in Tijuana.

### CHAPTER XV Tijuana, 1981-1984

On November 12, around noon, I crossed the Mexican border at San Ysidro, and was waved through by the Mexican border guards. There is seldom any wait at the border going into Tijuana but on my left I could see long lines of cars waiting to enter the United States.

This is one of the busiest border crossings in the world — one million vehicles per year — and unique for the diversity of those that cross. Thousands of retired Americans live in Baja California in trailer and motor home parks, and in luxurious condominiums that cost perhaps \$250,000 in Mexico, but would be worth a million dollars in California's coastal cities, such as La Jolla or Del Mar, less than 100 miles to the north. Foreigners may own the buildings, but they can only rent the land. (This can create legal problems that reach the Consulate.) A wide toll road from Tijuana to Ensenada allows for a fast and scenic trip — the 70 miles down the coast offers spectacular scenery that rivals Italy's Amalfi drive. These retired Americans may cross for shopping or doctor visits.

Others living below the border may work or go to school in California — Southwestern College is a few miles north of the border. Many Mexicans cross daily to work — both legally and illegally. ("Wetbacks" is a somewhat derogatory term for illegal aliens, but so called because they must cross the Tijuana River, which is dry part of the year and flooded during the rainy season. North of the border they can earn \$5 an hour as ranch hands, maids or nannies. Live in nannies may earn \$100 a week if they speak English. They can earn \$28 a week at a Maquiladora (factory) in Tijuana.) And there are smugglers, of birds as well as drugs.

Among those going into Mexico are vacationers to the resort towns of Rosarito or Ensenada. They go down in their trailers for the weekend or stay in the hotels. Teenagers pour across at vacation times and weekends because there is no age limit to buy alcohol. Naval personnel, Marines, and other soldiers, like to go to Tijuana during their time off —

## Library of Congress

it's a border town with entertainment to attract those who like to gamble — horse racing and dog racing in Agua Caliente — and nightclubs and beautiful beaches.

Shoppers pour across, particularly at Christmas, for the pottery, leather goods, and clothes; and for the good, cheap Mexican coffee and tax free liquor and cigarettes. The sick come to buy prescription medicines which are available over the counter in Mexico at one third the price of the same product in the United States. Some go to visit clinics for treatment not approved by the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA), such as Gerovital, the so called “Fountain of Youth” drug.

Volunteers, including doctors and nurses, church members, and other interested people, come to treat the sick, provide plastic surgery to children with cleft palates or other disfigurement that would otherwise go untreated, and do other work to help the poor and sick. Orphanages, such as the Orphanage of Hope, are adopted at Christmas time by stateside churches and other groups. One American woman, Christine Brady-Kosko, who visited an orphanage, returned to organize the Women of Colonia Esperanza (Colony of Hope), an area of wood shacks with dirt floors, no running water or electricity, and perched on a hill, with ditches for drainage and toilets. She organized the women to build their own clinic and school, mixing and pouring the cement themselves. Volunteers staff the clinic and school. Most of the men are among those who slip across the border in search of work. Some of the women work in the Maquiladora. Mother Teresa on her visit to Tijuana compared these slums to those of Calcutta. On the hills overlooking the city are some fine mansions. Former President Carter on occasion comes to Tijuana with the “Habitat” team, putting up homes for the poor.

On this, my first day, I drove through Tijuana and got lost in the narrow streets crowded with shoppers. I was finally escorted by a local police officer who pointed the way to the US Consulate General on Avenida Agua Caliente. I made a courtesy call on Consul General Robert Ezelle and Consul Lloyd DeWitt. This first day had been a realistic introduction to my three year consular assignment on the US-Mexican border.



## Library of Congress

### Nonimmigrant Visas

I had met Robert Ezelle at a Consular Officers' conference in Europe and he now introduced me to the staff of the Nonimmigrant Visa Office, where I had been assigned as Chief. I was immediately struck by the many people waiting in line. There was an overflow of people outside, trying to get in. The non immigration visa operation in Tijuana was worse than I had anticipated. It was poorly staffed when I arrived and, although I was the head of the Visa Section, I had to interview applicants at the counter. From time to time I would get some assistance from junior officers Joel Cassman and Thomas Pabst, both vice consuls, who were in Tijuana on their first Foreign Service assignments. Adrianna was my able right hand assistant, and other consular clerks prepared visas for pickup in the late afternoon. I also set up an initial screening process that permitted us to request additional proof of eligibility. The bulk of the workload consisted of nonimmigrant visas (tourist, business, students) and permits to enter the United States for medical, sports, or highly personal reasons. Some third country nationals living in California would come to apply for international trader-investor visas. These required special interviews and review of business assets and banking documents to prove their bona fide business and trading ties.

The visa lines were too long for one Consular officer and needed at least three permanently assigned junior officers to assist with interviews and consular paperwork. This did materialize but not until much later.

My duties at the Consulate were to train new junior officers coming in on the nonimmigrant visa line. Many preferred working in economic-political slots upstairs. Those junior officers who worked in visas soon realized that the visa line was a good place to learn about economic-political and social conditions as well as an opportunity to practice their Spanish. The rotation system of junior officers initiated by Robert Ezelle in the early 1980s was a

## Library of Congress

positive move, providing an opportunity to get acquainted with the different sections of the Consulate General.

Besides nonimmigrant visas we also issued special visa waivers for medical emergencies, to students and youth groups going to Disneyland (group waivers), and to Mexicans who needed to visit with a family member in California who was hospitalized or to attend a funeral. Mr. Corona of Mexican Immigration at the Tijuana side of the Border would call me from time to time to issue such waivers. These I routinely approved as they were bona fide requests from Mexican immigration authorities.

Early on I met our Consular agent, Don Johnson, who lives in Loreto, Baja California, and worked out with him a system of pre-screening nonimmigrant visas. Since Don knew the applicants in his area better than we did, our job issuing visas was made easier. We also facilitated special visas for Hermosa Beach, California.

February 24, I flew to La Paz, capital of Baja California (South) to issue tourist visas to Mexicans living in that remote area of our Consular district. I also visited Americans in the La Paz penitentiary. It was beneficial to meet La Paz officials and exchange ideas with tourist leaders. Each year, thousands of American tourists visit La Paz and go fishing in the waters around Cabo San Lucas. At Los Arcos Hotel I met Lic. Jorge Talamos Casta#ares, who was knowledgeable about consular and tourist matters. The next day I had lunch at Estrella del Mar with Manuel Orosco, of the Department of Tourism. This gave us ample time to review some American protection cases.

In March I met Mr. Rainz, Chief of the US Immigration and Naturalization Service, in San Ysidro, California. He and his assistant, Mr. Van der Graaf, who was in charge of special investigations, expressed concern about increasing problems caused by illegal entry of third country nationals, such as Chinese, San Salvadorans, and Guatemalans. Many of these undocumented aliens tried to hide their identity and purpose of entry but were

## Library of Congress

determined to get across the border to find a job. Some were hiding in car trunks, and others would present fraudulent documents to attain their goals.

Terry Daru, US Vice Consul in Merida, Yucatan, joined my staff on detail for two weeks. It was State Department policy to let junior officers visit other posts in order to familiarize themselves with conditions at other American consulates in Mexico.

On March 30, I drove to Mexicali (capital of Baja California North). I had been asked by the Governor of Baja California's office to issue visas to Mexicans living in Mexicali. Marco Antonio Bolaños Cacho, Secretary General of the Governor's office treated me as a special guest, and put the Governor's office at my disposal to conduct visa interviews. When I got to the Governor's palace there were huge lines of Mexican applicants waiting to see the US Consul. Every time a US Consular officer visited Mexicali it was customary to issue visas there. Advance notices of the US Consul's visit appeared in the press and local media. These consular visits to Mexicali took place about every other month, and we combined these trips with visits to American prisoners and other official duties.

Mexicali is also a border town but differs considerably from Tijuana. One catches the train here to go down into Mexico. Mexicali has wide avenues and the customary plaza as center of the town. I enjoyed seeing a folkloric ballet that reflected the Spanish influence of the past century. Mexicali is also interesting for its large Chinese population composed of descendants of Chinese who had been coolies, working on US railroads in the 19th century, who emigrated to Mexico from California. (There is also an inland settlement of Russians who emigrated to Mexico to escape the revolution in 1917.)

On April 1, the State Department authorized us to issue border crossing cards at the Consulate in Tijuana. The first weeks we had more applicants than we could reasonably handle.

A few days later I gave a speech to the Immigration Committee of San Diego attorneys in the Federal building on our visa issuance procedures in Tijuana. My duties were to inform

## Library of Congress

those with a need to know about our procedures. Immigration lawyers in the Los Angeles and San Diego areas were kept busy with immigrant and treaty trader-investor visas. They also invited me to speak before the Los Angeles Bar Association. Mr. Raoul Acosta, of the Immigration and Naturalization Service, was there. He was responsible for approving H and L Petitions for temporary workers. With these approved petitions applicants would come to the Consulate in Tijuana to apply for a visa. I also issued E Visas, (treaty trader and treaty investors), which required a review of the applicants' bona fide status in the United States, and proof of substantial volume of trade or investment with the United States. Since the 1994 implementation of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), between the United States, Mexico, and Canada, these visas have been in high demand.

From time to time, important people from the sports and media world would apply for nonimmigrant visas. On two occasions I issued a temporary worker's visa in my office to Fernando Valenzuela, the famous pitcher of the Los Angeles Dodgers and San Diego Padres. Since he is from Ciudad Obregon, Sonora, we talked about events there. He was always accompanied by his manager, Antonio D. Marco.

Pele, the Brazilian soccer champion, also applied for an H visa (temporary worker's visa), and told me at length about his humanitarian projects for children. We took some pictures with the staff. Maria Antoinetta Collins Gonzalez, a TV reporter for Univision (US-Spanish speaking channel), in Miami, used to come over regularly to have her media (I) visa renewed. These were excellent public relations visits that promoted better understanding between the US, Mexico, and Brazil. One day I also met Joe Herrera, a Mexican publicity agent for the well-known Mexican actors Jorge Negrette, Maria Felix, and Anthony Quinn. Dr. Jorge Gomez de Silva, of the Governor of Baja California Press Office, came to see me to apply for a J-1 exchange student visa. I often issued nonimmigrant visas to trainers and jockeys at the Agua Caliente Racetrack, in Tijuana. These included trainer Juan Garcia, jockey Victor Navarro, and his agent, Carlos Munguia.

## Library of Congress

Tensions mounted in the visa section on May 10, when special security police were placed in front of the Nonimmigrant Visa section. The Consulate security guard was removed by local Tijuana police for questioning in an alleged fraud scheme to obtain nonimmigrant visas. These guards were stationed there after two Mexican women were picked up for allegedly getting some tourist visas fraudulently. Then they tightened things up on the visa line, sending in two extra junior officers to secure better control over incoming nonimmigrant visa traffic.

The next month, I spent a full day in the Inspector General's office relating my views on the matter. In November of that year, however, the investigation cleared everyone on my staff. In October there had been a breakthrough in the issuance of B1/B2 non immigrant visas (business and pleasure). We began to issue B1/B2 visas for an indefinite period, which were valid for the period of the validity of the Mexican passport. Now, as many Mexicans wanted such a flexible visa, there were still longer lines at the Consulate.

### Cultural Affairs Officer

I was fortunate that Consul General Ezelle had asked me, in addition to my heading nonimmigrant visas, to assume responsibilities for cultural affairs. He often sent me to schools and to cultural events to represent the Consulate General. As Cultural Affairs Officer in Baja California I made many contacts on both sides of the border, which also provided interesting political contacts. It is at cultural events such as these that one meets political and business leaders who are knowledgeable about political and economic developments. Consul General and Mrs. Ezelle always had an impressive guest list of cultural leaders at their official residence, a mansion in the Chapultepec area of Tijuana, which, we were told, belonged to the general manager of Mexican actor Mario Moreno.

My first assignment in the cultural area was on November 20, 1981, as representative of the Consulate General at a reception given by the Chinese Embassy in Mexico City. The occasion was at the Tijuana International Trade Fair Center, at the Chinese Trade Exhibit

## Library of Congress

of the Province of Fisniun of the People's Republic of China. I met Mrs. Helena Nasser, Mr. Pamp Van Borslet, official mayor of the Governor of Baja California, and also the Chinese Ambassador to Mexico. Tijuana was already becoming an important maquiladora center in Mexico and US, Chinese and Japanese firms were interested in investing on the US-Mexican border. In addition to increasing job opportunities, trade and investment, the Maquiladoras created a vital and complex economic and cultural entity in the San Diego-Tijuana area, stimulating international trade and tourism.

On December, 24 1981, our first Christmas in Tijuana, we took a family trip to Pasadena to visit the Norton Simon Museum, where we saw many European masters. In the evening we stayed in nearby Glendale with friends Elie and Araxi Tchakmakjian, and their daughters Caroline and Christine. We had dinner at the Marina del Rey Lobster House and spent a few hours at the Los Angeles County Museum and at the Getty Museum in Malibu. From time to time, our friends, Ellie and Araxi, came to visit us in Tijuana, always bringing home cooked Lebanese food. In November, Rebecca enrolled at Hilltop High School, in Chula Vista. It was not always possible to match the time of the assignment with the beginning of a school semester . If there were some drawbacks to our Tijuana assignment, there were many benefits — travel, new cultures and language exposure.

Our good friends, Miguel Angel and Laura Garcia, were also very supportive during our stay in Baja California. They asked me to become godfather of their daughter, Gabriela.

January 14, 1982, I represented the Consul General at a dinner given by the Tijuana Chamber of Commerce in Club Campestre, on Avenida Agua Caliente. A variety of people interested in border programs attended, including media people covering historic and current events in Tijuana; Juan Curiel of TV Channel 12; Dal Watkins, Director of the San Diego Convention and Visitors Bureau; Ronald Beardreau, President of the Chamber of Commerce of Coronado; Ignatio Soto, Mexican representative of the San Diego Convention and Visitors Bureau; Hector Lutteroth, Secretary of Tourism of Baja California; and Bob Kuntze, President of the Chula Vista Chamber of Commerce.

## Library of Congress

At a late January, two day conference of the Commission of the Californias at the Luzern Hotel, in Tijuana, I met California Lt. Governor Michael Curb; Dr. Miguel Rolan of Mexicali; Lic. Juan Tintis Funche, Secretary of Tourism; and Mr. and Mrs. Russek of Pasadena, who were involved in US-Mexican border exchanges of students, church groups, and athletic teams.

On March 18, 1982, I had lunch in the Old Town area of San Diego at a monthly meeting of the Mexican Tourist Office. The US Consul was always invited. I met Jose Alfaro, director of sales, Mexican Tourism, in San Diego. Other guests were: Judy Jones of Mexican hotels; Reynolds Heriot of Chula Vista Travel Center; and Ignatio Soto of San Diego Conventions. These luncheons promoted travel and business in Mexico and improved bilateral relations on the United States-Mexican border.

### Official Visit to the University of Baja California

May 19, 1982, I paid an official visit to the University of Baja California in Tijuana, to discuss the possibilities of cultural exchanges and the participation of students, scholars, and cultural leaders under the Fulbright Exchange Program. Lic. Jose Antonio Lopez Tubillo, director of Services Escolares (Dean of Studies) introduced me to Rector Ruben Castro and Vice Rector Ren# Andrade. This was a useful meeting to discuss academics and student exchanges. I also talked with Lic. Raquel Staelmaky, vice director of the School of Tourism, one of the most popular departments of the University in the early 1980s. During this protocol visit, I met Professor Reyes, a noted historian of Baja California. I was impressed with the intellectual talent at the University and the interest in border exchanges.

As cultural affairs officer, I followed up on the cultural grant application of Lic. Lopez Tubillo of the University of Baja California. He would be an excellent leader grantee.

## Library of Congress

As I got to know more people in academic and political circles they came to visit me at the consulate. My visitors included Carlos Rodriguez of the Technological Institute in Tijuana, Antonio Mena Munguia, secretary general of the Workers Union (Sindicato de Trabajadores of Industria), Dr. Mario Di Soto, and his wife Candy. Dr. Di Soto, a famous oncologist, did graduate work at Emory University. Dr. Ramon and Rosa Naranjo Ureña and Dr. Carlos and Maria Reyna also became close friends, and would, at times, visit me.

Members of the Tijuana and San Diego Press, including Philip Sousa, editor of the Travel Section of the San Diego Union, often commented about Mexico's economic dilemmas. One day I met Juan Luis Curiel, reporter for Tijuana TV Channel 12; Juan Manuel Martinez Perez, of Herald, a popular Tijuana daily; Arturo Gonzalez Perez; and Aracelia Dominguez, of the ABC newspaper. Informacion ABC) Jonathan Freedman of the San Diego Tribune (evening paper), interviewed me for a story on nonimmigrant visa procedures, as did the manager of Diario de Baja California. Jim Robinson, associate publisher of Tijuana Magazine, came to discuss United States-Mexican cultural projects.

At a reception of Consul General Ezelle, I had a long talk with Gerald Warren, former editor in chief of The San Diego Union (now called The Union Tribune). Mr. Warren used to work for President Nixon at the White House, and since then, I have read all his in depth columns on international politics. Also present were tourist Secretary Hector Lutteroth, Mr. Bustamante, and Mr. Limon. They confirmed that there were some food shortages in Tijuana supermarkets. Since we used to shop at Calimax, a Tijuana store, we had noticed this problem. Arthur P. Shankle, political counselor, Embassy, Mexico City, was guest of honor. I also met Mel Tano, former US Consul in Amsterdam, and Mr. Cameron, former chief of Immigration Border Patrol in San Ysidro, California.

On September 17, 1982, I met Mr. Sirak Baloyan, a well known Tijuana businessman. The Baloyans had been a frontier family in Tijuana, and were associated with its early history.

Inauguration of Tijuana's Cultural Center



## Library of Congress

FONAPAS, a large cultural center and a showcase of Mexican culture, opened in Tijuana on October 20, 1982. I attended the opening ceremonies, along with Consul General Robert Ezelle and his wife, and Consul Lloyd De Witt. Mexican President Jos# Lopez Portillo and his wife joined Baja California Governor Roberto de la Madrid and his wife at the inauguration, as did hundreds of guests from Mexico and the United States. We watched an Omnimax film entitled "People of the Sun." Omnimax has created excellent documentaries on Mayan culture and US-made documentaries. I met some people who helped me in my cultural affairs work: Mr. Ibarra, public relations officer of the mayor's office in Tijuana; Mr. Alesio, former manager of the nearby Agua Caliente racetrack; (his daughter, Lupita Alesio, is now a famous Mexican singer); and Mrs. Irma de la Cruz de Laroque, who managed public relations for FONAPAS at that time. Mrs. Maria de la Parra, director of the Casa de la Cultura (the older cultural center) and I talked about United States-Mexican contacts on the border and about projects to exchange musical, theater, and folkloric groups. With Tijuana Mayor Ren# Trevi#o, and his predecessor, Roberto Andrade Salazar, the Consulate General had good public relations contacts.

In mid November, I attended a press conference at the Aztec Hotel in Tijuana, that was set up by Dr. Jorge Gomez de Silva, director for press relations of the Baja California government. Hugh Kottler, our embassy officer for border cultural affairs also participated. Many border issues were discussed, including immigration, culture, media communication, and sewage problems. Sewage from the Tijuana River flows out to sea and pollutes American waters and beaches, such as Imperial Beach. At the time, there was talk of building a sewage plant in Mexico, with United States help. Now such a plant is being built in the Tijuana River Valley in San Ysidro.

On another occasion, I was guest speaker at Emerald Junior High School in El Cajon, in east San Diego County. I spoke to students in two history classes on life in the US Foreign Service. The talks were videotaped and were followed by a question and answer period. There was much interest in Foreign Service work, since a number of these students were

## Library of Congress

immigrants. Schools in San Diego County have, perhaps, the most diverse populations in the United States, with children of Mexican, European, Asian, African, Russian, Caribbean, and Middle Eastern descent, to name some of the mix. During this period, thousands of Asians were coming to California each month.

I had invited my friend, Miguel Angel Garcia, to hear the Murray Korda String Quartet at Club Campestre, and there we met Fernando Amaya Guerrero, assistant director general of the El Mexicano daily. I visited "Templo Mayor" at FONAPAS, which showcases Mexican Indian art. At the International Trade Center, I saw the Puebla and Hidalgo exhibits of folkloric artifacts, and I attended some cultural sessions of the Commission of the Californias at the Luzern Hotel. The Commission of the Californias met twice a year to debate issues between California and Baja California. Key representatives of the governors of both states became involved in policy decisions affecting these two border areas.

In the fall, Martha Grant, of the US Information Agency in Mexico City, came to interview applicants for United States scholarships. Her job was to grant scholarships to outstanding Mexicans who wanted to study in the United States. She spoke with candidates from Baja California and Sonora. I set up appointments for her and attended the review board. Two candidates were selected: Lic. Jose Luis Anana, Vice Rector of the University of Baja California, and Carlos Rodriguez of the Technical Institute in Tijuana. Consul Robert J. Chevez hosted a lunch for Dr. Grant, which architect Esparza of Mexicali and I attended. Esparza had been very active in promoting cultural and academic exchanges between Mexico and the United States. That evening, we were guests at the home of Dr. and Mrs. Richard and Anita Potts in Bonita, a beautiful rural town just north of the border. (Dick Potts handled medical examinations for immigrant visa applicants in Tijuana.)

In November I was invited to visit the Centro Bachillerato Tecnologico, in the Tijuana Beach area. Rafael Parra Ibarra and Daniel Bolanos showed me the various technical departments. The Tijuana media documented the visit.

## Library of Congress

### Mayor of Guadalajara to Visit Mayor of San Diego

On December 26, 1983, I welcomed Mayor Guillermo Vallarta Plata of Guadalajara at the airport in Tijuana. He was accompanied by Vice Mayor Ing. Ignacio Montoya. He came to San Diego on a Leader's program sponsored by the US State Department's Cultural Exchange Program. At the request of US Ambassador John Gavin, I managed the trip to its minute details. The next day I accompanied the mayor of Guadalajara to see Roger Hedgecock, then the mayor of San Diego. Hedgecock received us at San Diego City Hall. In addition to US Consul Robert Chavez and myself, other San Diego officials attending the event were Mike McDade, Regmigio Bermudez, and Councilman Bill Cleator. First the two mayors discussed various similarities between the cities of San Diego and Guadalajara, which is in the state of Jalisco. The mayor of Guadalajara was interested in the San Diego sewage treatment plant. After the meeting with Mayor Hedgecock, Cleator (who later ran for Mayor against Maureen O'Connor, and lost) went with us to see the well known agriculture plant. Dr. Richard King, director of water utilities for San Diego, and Dr. Charles Cooper provided a technical briefing at the plant site. The Mayor of Guadalajara was satisfied with his visit and the information given by his host. Ambassador Gavin and Public Affairs Officer Rogers confirmed this later in a message of thanks to me.

In January, 1984, I attended the San Diego Boys' Choir presentation in Tijuana's cultural center and went to see "Se#orita de Tacna," a play at the Bugasan Theater in Tijuana. (There I met Silvia Pinal, a famous Mexican actress who was the wife of the governor of the State of Tlaxcala. I also met Irani, another versatile Iranian-Mexican actress.)

In February I was guest speaker at the junior Chamber of Commerce of Tijuana (the Jaycees) and mingled with many promising young members. The next day I co-chaired a meeting on ecology and the Tijuana River estuary (sponsored by USIS) with Dr. Charles Cooper of the University of California, San Diego (UCSD), as the main lecturer. Mayor David Ojeda Ochoa, of Ensenada, and Dr. Ismael Llamas Amaya, assessor of the Governor of Baja California attended the lectures. It was not until March 9 that some

## Library of Congress

concrete steps were taken by both the US and Mexico to make progress on pollution problems shared by the two countries.

### Peso Devaluation

In the spring of 1982, the Mexican peso plunged in value from 25 to 45 pesos to the US dollar. An earlier devaluation took place in 1976. Rumors of the flight of Mexican capital to US banks further deteriorated the Mexican economy, despite President Lopez Portillo's pleas to Mexican financiers to invest in Mexico.

On April 13 we had our first look at PRI candidate Miguel de la Madrid, who was Jose Lopez Portillo's appointed successor. Traditionally, Mexican presidents pick out their successor (it is called "d#daso"). He had good credentials, having graduated from Harvard University School of Economics. De la Madrid made a name for himself when he was running the Mexican Federal Budget Office under President Lopez Portillo.

In September, economic conditions worsened in Mexico, and financial speculation rose when President Lopez Portillo nationalized the Mexican banks. In his last State of the Union message (Informe) the following day, Portillo announced that all Mexican banks were closed. When they reopened on September 6, 1982, the Mexican peso fell to 70 pesos to the US dollar. This economic scenario presented the new presidential candidate, Miguel de la Madrid, with a major problem: how to preserve international reserves, while concurrently keeping the federal deficit in check.

Governor Roberto de la Madrid (not related to the PRI presidential candidate), of Baja California attempted to ease the financial plight of Baja California merchants. The border area was, and is, dependent on business with the United States, and most business transactions are made in US dollars. In the governor's State of the State message on October 1, 1982, in Mexicali, he referred to the advantages of stimulating border industries to improve Mexican trading policies with its neighbor to the north.

## Library of Congress

### Reagan in Tijuana

On October 8, US President Ronald Reagan and President elect Miguel de la Madrid met at the Benito Juarez Monument in Tijuana. It was a traditional ritual between the US and Mexican presidents following a presidential election. (Miguel de la Madrid had been elected for a six year term in July.) White House communication specialists were operating out of the Consulate General in Tijuana to supervise the security for the presidential visit. After the ceremony and remarks at the Juarez Monument, President Reagan hosted a luncheon for the Mexican president at the waterfront Hotel del Coronado in Coronado, just south of central San Diego. It was the first time I witnessed many of the technicalities that go into arranging a presidential visit abroad.

### Central America, the Contras, and the Ripple Effect in Mexico

In March of 1982, US Secretary of State Alexander Haig made a strong statement concerning subversive perils in Central America and on the future of the Caribbean basin. Officials had uncovered some proof that the Sandinista government in Nicaragua was involved in political affairs in El Salvador. On March 23, a right wing military coup intensified the Guatemalan political crisis. The guerrilla warfare in Guatemala had already debilitated the Guatemalan economy and exacerbated the lot of the poor people. In just five days, however, things in the area changed somewhat for the better. Jose Napoleon Duarte's middle of the road Christian Democratic party in El Salvador was elected with 30 percent of the vote in parliamentary elections. These favorable election results gave an impetus to the democratic process in El Salvador.

In May, Ted Wilkinson, of the political section of the embassy, briefed us on political conditions in Nicaragua, and the strategy of the Contras, who were supporting anti-Sandinista subversive operations in Central American countries. The minister-counselor of the embassy, Mexico City, came to Tijuana to give us a classified briefing on the situation. He was worried about the destabilizing factors affecting Central America, such as the

## Library of Congress

Sandinista revolution, the Contras, and the Mexican currency devaluation, and its impact on Mexico and US foreign policy. Secretary of State George Shultz delivered a strong speech to the Organization of American States (OAS), in which he expressed concern that the Soviet Union was shipping arms to Nicaragua via Cuba. He stated that it was evident that these shipments to Nicaragua, backed by the Soviet Union and Cuba, were primarily aimed at destabilizing the Central American scene.

A politically strong Mexico was viewed in Washington as favorable to US national interests. There was a fundamental fear in both US and Mexican political circles that Cuba's influence in Nicaragua could spread further into Central America, and to Mexican states such as Chiapas, Guerrero, and Oaxaca, where guerrilla training was common in the mountains.

### The Falkland Islands Crisis (Malvinas)

On April 2, 1982, Argentina invaded the Falkland Islands. Emotions were running high in Tijuana when President Reagan backed British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher's invasion of the Falkland Islands. It was not until April 16 that Secretary of State Haig tried to mediate between Great Britain and Argentina. He flew to Buenos Aires and London, and conferred with General Leopoldo Galtieri, head of the three man military junta in Argentina, and Sr. Costa Mendez, Argentinean foreign minister. However, Haig's shuttle diplomacy did not prove successful. It became apparent on May 29 that the British advance toward Port Stanley meant military victory for the British. The OAS in Washington held an emergency meeting to evaluate the geopolitical consequences of this crisis. President Reagan's stance on the side of Great Britain had been controversial. Although the United States is part of the OAS, President Reagan demonstrated that our historic close ties with Great Britain always take priority over any other considerations. The Reagan administration took the side of England against Argentina when it allowed Great Britain to use a US reconnaissance satellite during the British invasion of the Falkland Islands. It was therefore seen as a positive move on his part when President Reagan

## Library of Congress

toured Latin America in November, 1982. In the aftermath of our support for Great Britain in the Falkland Islands his visit helped to mend fences with Latin American countries that felt that America's "good neighbor" policy of the early 1930s was waning.

President Reagan's trip to Paris to attend the economic summit was an annual exercise of the G-7 (United States, Canada, Great Britain, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, and the European Community). At Versailles, however, Reagan specifically tried to obtain NATO members' cooperation on a proposed Siberian gas pipeline without an agreement on substance. Secretary Haig submitted his resignation on June 25 over foreign policy differences with Reagan's aides on the gas pipeline. Haig felt that the Soviet Union's military preponderance would be enhanced by the gas pipeline. The other European allies were more inclined to give the green light to build the Soviet pipeline. General Haig was replaced as Secretary of State by George Shultz.

### Social and Official Visits

In October, 1982, the Foreign Service inspectors were in Tijuana. They were given a chance to talk to members of the staff at receptions hosted by Consul General and Mrs. Robert Ezelle and Consul Steve and Elsa Hobart. Foreign Service inspectors wanted to learn more of the posts' internal operations, and were particularly interested in potential foreign service morale problems.

On December 1, 1982, Miguel de la Madrid was sworn in as president of Mexico. Bernardo Sepulveda Amor, former Mexican ambassador to the United States, took over as foreign minister. Thomas O. Enders had become our assistant secretary of state for Latin American affairs. They would be key players in United States-Mexican relations.

### Chapter XVIUS Citizens and Protection Services

On May 31, 1983, the consul general offered me a new position as Chief of the US Citizens and Protection Services. I agreed with him that it would be interesting for me "to

## Library of Congress

test new waters.” Protection work was a pressure filled job in Tijuana. Calls came in from citizens in need on an hourly basis. It was a challenging job with a staff of four capable Foreign Service nationals who handled protection work during the day. Every week we had an American duty officer who handled emergency calls around the clock. Every morning I had a meeting with my staff. We would go over news items in the Tijuana press mentioning accidents of US citizens. Calls were made to local hospitals, jails, the office of the Federal Highway Patrol, and key police stations, to find out whether any Americans were in trouble.

My two right hand men, consular assistants Ed Assad and Jos# Vasquez, primarily handled arrests, accidents, and prisoner cases; and were liaisons with the District Attorney's offices and the Tijuana Police. Both Ed and Jos# were indispensable to the US Citizens and Protection Services. They knew each other's jobs and could fill in for one another. We also had another foreign service national who took care of social security benefits and veterans cases. It was a smooth operation and I intended to keep it so. During my daily, morning staff meetings I stressed the importance of American citizens' human rights and our ability to lend consular assistance when it was needed during their visits in Baja California. The Tijuana-San Ysidro border is a complex port of entry. Many foreign tourists who visit Baja California, Mexico, venture across the border through San Ysidro, and take the trolley to visit San Diego for a few hours. There are daily crossings of Europeans, Japanese, Chinese, and other nationalities.

On July 7, 1983, Jos# Vasquez went with me to the Tijuana Airport to meet Ing. Cirilo Picazo Cuevas, director of the regional aeronautical inspection team which handled the emergency overflights which US hospitals frequently requested. I was particularly interested in how could we improve medical evacuations of American tourists.

The Consul General also often received requests from the University of California at San Diego (UCSD) Medical Center and Mercy Hospital to admit some Mexican patients for emergency surgery or care unavailable in Tijuana. Celia Diaz, of San Diego, who worked



## Library of Congress

on the San Diego Bi-National Emergency Committee, was a key contact in these critical situations, and we maintained constant contact with her.

Tijuana is the busiest port of entry on the US-Mexican border, and our Consulate's Citizens and Protection Department was the hotline for taking care of problems resulting from this high level of activity.

Later on I met Lic. C. Montes, chief of the Regional Border office of the Automobile Registration office in La Paz, Baja California, South. In the past, Mr. Montes tried to assist American tourists traveling in the Baja California peninsula.

From time to time letters or calls of complaint came from retired US citizens living in Rosarito. Usually they complained about lack of services in their apartment buildings. Many had invested in condominiums and in the 1980s, foreign owned property located within 100 miles of Mexico's coast had to be put in a trust (Fideicomiso) for 30 years. I investigated these complaints and brought them to the attention of Lic. Wilfredo Ruiz, chief of tourism in Tijuana.

On July 13, 1983, I attended a Border Crime conference at the Luzern Hotel in Tijuana. Many police officials from both sides of the border attended the seminar. Vice Consul Lynn Allison went with me. We were assigned to a committee dealing with the recovery of stolen US cars. Many cars were stolen in the San Diego area and brought to Tijuana for sale or use there. Some of these vehicles were taken apart in Mexico, and the parts were sold to car dealers. To this day car theft is an epidemic on the US-Mexican border. When I was in charge of United States citizens' protection work in Tijuana, we had a special person on my staff handling US vehicle recoveries (autos, RVs, trucks and trailers). In the early 1980s there was a spirit of cooperation between the United States and Mexico on how to solve some of the outstanding border problems, including car theft, water pollution, and drug smuggling. At the conference, I met California Attorney General John K. Van

## Library of Congress

de Kamp, Mr. Sausa of the Automobile Registration Office, and Governor Roberto de la Madrid, of Baja California.

American Ambassador John Gavin made an official visit to Tijuana on July 28. He stopped by the Consulate to say hello to the staff. I escorted him through the US Citizen Protection section, and he showed much interest in our operation.

### Prisoner Transfer

The bilateral consular treaty signed by Mexico and the United States permitted the exchange of prisoners between the two countries. On July 15 I became involved in just such a prisoner transfer. Magistrate Harris of San Diego presided over the move. Other officials at the transfer were Lic. Ruiz Duarte, Director of La Mesa prison in Tijuana, Lic. Raul Cabrillo, Federal District Attorney in charge of drug problems, and Lic. Angel Saad. After a few weeks on this job, I saw that the consulate general had cultivated excellent contacts with Tijuana and Baja California officials. Whenever an American citizen was in trouble with the law or in need of medical attention, we knew where to call for help on a 24-hour basis. Tijuana officials in turn, often called us. My predecessor in this position, Bill Rossner, had been an American liaison with Mexican officials. One evening he invited us to his home where we met a number of influential persons: Dean Navin of the University of San Diego School of Law; Ralph Limon, Mexican liaison, California; Jose Ortiz of the US Highway Patrol; US attorney Daniel Henry; and Mrs. Francisco Jimenez, who was involved in Maquiladores (border industries) in Baja California. I also met with Luis Leyva, commander of the Tijuana International Airport, and Enrique Peniche.

### Tuna Embargo

Another consular responsibility was the protection of American property overseas. For years, US fishermen have had problems concerning tuna boats in Mexican waters. On July 20, 1983, a US tuna boat, Laurie Ann, of San Pedro, California, was seized near Point Eugenia. Mexican officials claimed that the boat had been seized in Ensenada for having

## Library of Congress

fished tuna illegally in Mexican waters. This was another “tuna war” crisis. The United States did not recognize Mexico's 200 mile, off shore limit for migratory tuna. Because of past seizures, the United States had imposed an embargo on Mexican tuna.

Our Consulate General in Tijuana was pressured to try to obtain the early release of the Laurie Ann. My office had daily communication with the embassy on this matter. It absorbed most of my time. Charles Finan, Fisheries Attach# at the embassy in Mexico City, briefed us on US policy toward Mexico regarding the seizure of tuna boats. Finan especially referred to the March, 1983, San Jose agreement signed by Costa Rica, Panama and the United States.

For weeks disagreement over the Laurie Ann continued to exist between the office of Fisheries and Customs in Ensenada. We dispatched vice consul Lynn Allison to Ensenada to monitor the situation. She kept in touch with me by telephone and I, in turn, spoke with Mr. Finan. President Miguel de la Madrid visited Baja California in August while the Laurie Ann case was still in limbo. It was obvious to us at the consulate that the Mexican Foreign Ministry was not in a hurry to give the green light to resolve the tuna boat incident.

It was not until August 12 that I learned of a private agreement between the San Pedro Fishing cooperatives and the Mexican government regarding the Laurie Ann case. According to Mexican officials, the release of the ship could take place only upon payment of a \$20,000 fine. David Ojeda Ochoa (former mayor of Ensenada) was helpful at all times during this crisis. He never let the tuna boat seizure affect our good relations with the mayor's office in Ensenada.

On August 2 there was a Los Angeles class action suit (Feldman vs the State Department) on the part of some US attorneys' attempts to secure quick issuance of nonimmigrant visas for their clients at the consulate in Tijuana. During this same period, Auxiliary Bishop Gilberto Chavez, of San Diego, called to request a special waiver for a Mexican musical group to tour California. Early on, in my tour of duty in Tijuana, I became acquainted with

## Library of Congress

Monsignor Juan Jos# Posadas, Catholic Bishop of Tijuana, who later became a Cardinal in Guadalajara, and was assassinated in 1994. I also met his successor, Bishop Emilio Berlie Belauzaran (now serving in the Merida, Yucatan diocese), who was very interested in self help groups, and he pointed out to me how advanced we were in the United States in developing these groups.

Consul Chevez had replaced Lloyd DeWitt, who retired from the Foreign Service as chief of the Consular section. Bob and I had lunch with Captain Vaught, who headed the San Diego Shore Patrol Service. Vaught was Navy Commander at 32nd Street Headquarters. At that meeting, we went over some of our consular projects and discussed ways of improving our liaison with the US Navy when Navy personnel encountered problems in Mexico. On another occasion Jerry Sipes invited me to meet at the US Navy Shore Patrol office. When US service personnel were involved in incidents in Tijuana, the Shore Patrol was notified right away. Consular officers did not normally handle such cases and so were able to concentrate on US tourists in distress.

We also sent a consular officer to Tecate, a small town about an hour's drive east of Tijuana, to look after US tourists during the Pamplonada, a short lived endeavor meant to replicate the traditional running of the bulls at Pamplona, Spain. Due to accidents and differing attitudes of Americans toward the event, it received negative publicity in the US media.

### Tijuana-San Diego Press

As chief of American Citizens and Protection Services, I often had to cope with an occasional invasion of the press at the Consulate. On August 22, 1983, reporters came to my office, seeking information on the investigation of alleged mistreatment by Mexican prison officials of a US citizen jailed in Tijuana. I told my vice consuls working on the case that we had to visit the prisoner and obtain firsthand testimony before notifying Washington as to whether there had been any mistreatment.

## Library of Congress

One week later, I encountered another case that created an uproar in the San Diego press. On August 31 I attended a court hearing in downtown Tijuana involving Mrs. Clague, a US citizen who was a prisoner in Tijuana. She was destitute, elderly, and sick. Congressman Duncan Hunter, who was interested in her case, sent Bob Medina to the hearing. No case received more press attention on both sides of the border than this case. Jeannette De Wyze of the San Diego Reader interviewed me in my office, and I informed her of the situation and told her what we could do.

The Consulate General informs the family of the prisoner's condition, and whether legal assistance has been provided. It also explains the status of a given case. We were routinely able to inform, to facilitate, to get medicine and mail to the prisoners, and to visit them at will. We could usually talk to the press after we had informed the special Consular Services in the State Department in Washington. In some politically sensitive cases, we would refer the press to the Public Affairs Office of the US Embassy in Mexico City. Contact with the press was taken seriously, as we were official spokespeople for the US government abroad. Any statement on issues, such as tourist visas, treatment of US citizens, pending immigration legislation, the Simpson-Rodino Amnesty Bill, and border issues such as the stationing of military personnel, was to be dealt with discretion as it affected US political policy.

In early September of 1983, I was in Mexicali to attend an International Editors' Conference on border issues. It was chaired by Roberto de la Madrid, Governor of Baja California, and was attended by newspaper editors from Hermosillo, Ciudad Juarez, Mexicali, Tijuana, El Paso, Calexico, and El Centro. The open debate covered matters affecting the border, such as immigration, the environment, health, and culture. During receptions at the Luzern Hotel and the Holiday Inn, we socialized with the press editors and Baja California officials. I joined the editors on a visit to the Mexicali Fine Arts Museum to see a historical exhibit of the State of Baja California. I was also invited to the Tijuana Press Club, El Nido del Aquila (the Eagle's Nest), and met their founder and President

## Library of Congress

J. Alberto Rosales, who made me an honorary member. During the lunch I spoke on my experiences in the Foreign Service.

### Reagan in La Paz, Baja California

We were very busy in the consulate, preparing for President Reagan's second visit to our consular district. There were many contacts to be made by Security and communication personnel. On August 14, President Reagan met with President Miguel de la Madrid in La Paz, Baja California Sur. Some token agreements were signed by both presidents to improve pollution control and expand commerce.

### Visit by the Director General of the Foreign Service

Among the many US officials visiting Tijuana was Joan Clark, director general of the Foreign Service. Counselor for Consular Affairs Larry Lane of the embassy was with Director General Clark, who expressed an interest in staff problems as well as those of their dependents. I was glad to see her succeed Diego Asencio, who worked with me in Panama, as assistant secretary of state for consular affairs when Diego was appointed ambassador to Brazil.

### Receptions at Home

We attended many evening receptions with both American and Mexican families. From time to time, we had guests over for dinner. On April 8, 1982, we had one such dinner at home for Consul General Robert Ezelle; Consul Lloyd De Witt and his daughter; my mother, who was visiting us; and Lloyd's assistant, Senior Foreign Service National Virtudes.

### Immigrant Visas

When my assignment with Citizens and Protection Services ended, I was adjudicating immigrant visas with Consul Steve Hobart, who was a veteran Foreign Service officer with

## Library of Congress

wide experience in consular and political affairs. During this period, I met Professor David North, director of the Transcentury Foundation in Washington, DC. North came to speak about US immigration law and the Simpson-Rodino bill that had passed both Houses of Congress on May 19, 1983. He referred to demographic changes in the United States and said that many undocumented aliens who had worked in the fields would benefit from this legislation (popularly referred to as the Amnesty Bill). He raised the concern that some undocumented aliens were taking jobs from US citizens and permanent residents. We also had a visit by Dick Mann, chief of the Visa Department at the embassy in Mexico City.

One day I met Jorge Bustamante, director of the Colegio de Mexico in Tijuana, a well known research school that analyzes US-Mexican border issues. He showed me maps and statistics on undocumented aliens. His views on immigration differed from the official US position. He felt that undocumented Mexicans were badly needed in the agricultural industries of California, and that they actually contributed to the general well being and economy of California.

### Baja California Politics

The PRI (Mexican majority party), had won heavily in the '83 Baja election. Licenciado Xicotencatl Leyva Mortera was elected governor of Baja California Norte, and René Treviño became the mayor of Tijuana. The exception was in Ensenada, where former Mayor David Ojeda Ochoa, who had switched from the PRI to the PRD (left of center ticket) had won by a wide margin against PRI candidate Swain Chavez. On September 24, 1983, voters in Baja also elected 13 local deputies. The number of these representatives is proportionate according to the population of each state in Mexico. In the Mexican Senate, there is one senator from each of the 32 Mexican states.

Mayor elect Ojeda came to see me on October 19, and we talked at length about the need to expand the exporting and shipping potential of the port of Ensenada. The consul

## Library of Congress

general attended the oath of office ceremony by Leyva Mortera as Governor of Baja California.

President Reagan was challenged by the Soviets when a 747 Korean jetliner was shot down, and the confrontation caused a deterioration in US-Soviet relations and some disruption at the Port of Los Angeles. Dock workers in Los Angeles refused to unload a Soviet freighter, in protest against the downing of the Korean airliner. The Soviet ship was finally diverted from Los Angeles to Ensenada, Baja California where Mexican dock workers unloaded it.

On October 1, Governor Roberto de la Madrid gave his last State of the State address in Mexicali. There were protests in front of the governor's office, due to the frustration of many people who were unable to find adequate housing.

### Extra Security due to Beirut Disaster

On October 23, 1983, we got word that a US Marine barracks in Beirut had been demolished by a car bomb, killing more than 200. We immediately tightened security at the consulate general with extra guards posted around the clock. We were instructed by Washington to increase vigilance for dependents as well, and to take special precautions. We were told not to go home by the same route every day. This bombing was worse than the April 18 bombing of our embassy, in Beirut, which had killed 63. In spite of the loss of American lives, Marines were kept in the area until February 26, 1984.

### Grenada

The day after the attack on the Marine barracks in Beirut, President Reagan sent in US troops to Grenada to secure safety for American citizens there. The island of Grenada had been dominated by the Soviet-backed left wing in Cuba and Nicaragua. The leftist government in Grenada had destabilized the free nations of the Caribbean. It was not until November 3 and 8 that we experienced some negative repercussions, when Mexicans



## Library of Congress

demonstrated at the Consulate General building in protest over the US invasion of Grenada. Those of us in the Foreign Service felt that the rescue of American citizens stranded in Grenada justified the president's actions.

### Dependents' Life in the Foreign Service

There are ups and downs in the career life of Foreign Service dependents. It was a breakthrough in the early 1970s when dependent spouses were allowed to seek employment overseas. Because of our proximity to San Diego, Ma##t# was able to secure employment at the US Naval Supply Center there. The job gave her experience in US government work. When I retired from the service, she was able to continue working there.

It was not easy for us both to work. Tijuana was a demanding assignment because of the many social obligations in the evenings. It required much discipline to keep our separate working schedules. Each morning I took Ma##t# to the US side of the border, where the trolley took her to downtown San Diego. Rebecca attended Hilltop High School in Chula Vista, just north of the border. We were fortunate in that the consulate had arranged for a van to pick up dependent children at their homes in Tijuana. But the arrangement restricted Rebecca's extracurricular activities, since the van picked her up at a certain hour in Chula Vista. In retrospect, I believe Rebecca could have benefitted from some afterschool activities to develop her future. But, overall, life in the Foreign Service offers exceptional cultural benefits. The Tijuana assignment offered stateside job opportunities and schools. In our case, Ma##t#'s work offered her some financial freedom to travel to France to visit her family who depended on her for moral support.

### Nomination to Caracas

On March 23, 1984, I received a cable from the US State Department, nominating me as consul in charge of citizens' interests at the US Embassy in Caracas, Venezuela. We had just celebrated Rebecca's 18th birthday with a good friend, Billie Johnson, and my mother.

## Library of Congress

It was not until April 10 that I decided that I would retire from the Foreign Service, effective July, 1984. I therefore requested a cancellation of my assignment to Caracas.

The last months were spent saying good bye to friends in Baja California. Mrs. Fierro was one of those who called me to express her gratitude for my service to the Folkloric children's group in Tijuana.

On May 18, we had a briefing by Michael Shol, deputy director of the Office of Policy Planning on Central American policies.

Five days later, I had dinner with Lic. Lopez of the University of Baja California.

On June 8, I was asked to chair a lecture by Dr. Stephen Mumm of the University of Colorado on the political aspects of ecology. There were also many inquiries concerning the proposed Mazzoli Immigration Bill in Congress.

Then June 29, 1984, the staff hosted a farewell reception for Consul General Ezelle and me.

### Life After the Foreign Service

When I moved from Tijuana to San Diego in July, 1984, I settled down in Pacific Beach. I enjoyed living in P.B. and the walks on the beach. When I retired, it became clear to me that I would never really leave the Foreign Service. There is something about my past career that keeps my interest in foreign travel and foreign cultures alive on a day-to-day basis. To this day, I do not feel that I ever left the Service. I am deeply involved in reading about US foreign policies and developments, and I continue to travel. I remain a student of American-Mexican relations and I try to familiarize myself with books by authors such as Octavio Paz, Carlos Fuentes, Jorge G. Castañeda, and Robert Pastor, among others. As a member of the American Foreign Service Association, I continue making an effort to keep

## Library of Congress

our legislators informed on the importance of the American Foreign Service and its direct link with our national security interests.

In 1987, I moved from Pacific Beach to San Ysidro, not far from the US-Mexican border. Although I continued to work on a part-time basis at Naval Engineering Systems (NAVELEX), US Naval Hospital, San Diego, and North Island Naval Air Station, in Coronado, and a brief assignment as a proofreader at the San Diego Daily Transcript. I was able to be with my mother in Belgium when she had a relapse in her health in August, 1989. On August 24, 1991, I lost her forever, but I feel she is still with me as a friend.

May 15, 1993, My daughter, Rebecca, gave birth to a lovely baby girl, Ashley Marie Carlota Guilbeau. Ashley's father, David, serves in the US Navy. It has been a joy visiting with Ashley since she and my daughter live in San Diego.

I continue to travel throughout Mexico, to Puerto Vallarta, Guanajuato, Guadalajara, Dolores, San Miguel de Allende, and Oaxaca. My familiarity with Spanish helped me in my visits to Spain, Venezuela, Argentina, Chile, and Uruguay. I ventured to Moscow and St. Petersburg, Russia, in 1992. Such visits would have been unthinkable during my career, and I returned home with some firsthand impressions of the new Russia, such as the resilience and courage of the average Russian citizen that reflects their long and interesting history.

## CHAPTER XVII Conclusion

When I returned to private life, I was finally able to reflect on the momentous 23 years that I had spent in the US Foreign Service. There had been highlights such as the Cuban missile crisis while I was serving in Panama, when we were called upon to be on duty around the clock, and during the diplomatic break in relations when I was part of a select consular team assigned to keep the consular section open — our only vital official link with the Panamanian government. On another such occasion in the United Arab Republic

## Library of Congress

(Egypt), I guaranteed consular access to Americans for emergencies and evacuation until just before a break in and the destruction of our Consulate General.

In Belgium, I worked four and one half years to improve US-Belgian relations and maintain the US strategic military security position in Western Europe through public relations and meetings with key Flemish politicians. In spite of rigid budget cuts and threats of port closures, we were able to keep American Consulate General Antwerp open until the early 1990s when the Cold War subsided.

When I first joined the Foreign Service in 1961, my main goal was ideological and altruistic. I went in with missionary zeal, to project the US image abroad, particularly in Latin America. I wanted to convey to people our strong democratic position. Through my work in the office and at a variety of social events, I feel I was able to accomplish that goal.

We are all immigrants. This country is not united by one culture and one history. We are a multi faceted, multi linguistic and multi cultural society. American history, therefore, is very unique. There is only one idea that unites us all — that we are Americans, a nation that was founded upon the belief that we are all created equally before God.

When I began to write this memoir, I wanted to call it “The Education of an American Foreign Service Officer,” for surely this is a position that provides a unique education to those who serve in it. As a Foreign Service officer, I could develop in areas that were compatible with my official, administrative, consular, cultural, and political responsibilities. I did this by focusing on academic contacts. I taught English at the US-Panamanian Bi-National Center in Panama. This permitted me to get close to Panamanian youths and their teachers, and I believe I had a positive impact on them. I also wrote articles on the American way of life in Tierra y Dos Mares (Land and Two Oceans) and was thereby able to reach a more general Panamanian audience.

## Library of Congress

In Egypt, I continued my English teaching in two classes at the USIS Jefferson Library. In Hermosillo, when they needed a teacher of English and French at the University of Sonora, I taught in the evenings for about a year.

I would advise a newcomer to the Foreign Service to make of your diplomatic career what you want to make of it. There are many opportunities to grow. Consular work is varied, given the need to put US citizens' needs overseas on a priority basis. It is fulfilling to be involved in a project of your choice: teaching, art, public speaking, cultural events, or sports. Immersion in the life of the local community is essential to an effective Foreign Service officer and to the development of your career education.

My off duty activities — teaching, speaking and writing, were carried out with prior approval from the office of the Historian in Washington, DC, or the administrative officer at my post. My fluency in Spanish, French, and Dutch broadened my social contacts in Egypt, Canada, Greece, Mexico, and Belgium, where I could reach out to other nationalities (diplomatic or host nationals). I learned that there is no such thing as a bad post. The post is what one makes of it. In all my assignments, I had to develop managerial skills. In some small posts, such as Antwerp, I had to wear several hats: consular, administrative, political, and cultural. At larger posts, such as US embassies in London and Panama City and the US Consulate General in Tijuana, we had big workloads, involving diverse contact with the public — including the drafting of cables and doing political reporting. As I became more skilled at this “mixed bag,” I developed my own priorities and agenda. The top three priorities on my agenda during my entire career were: improving the US image abroad; taking care of US citizens' needs; and developing managerial skills. It was an ongoing education and an exciting one.

Teaching and writing did not offer a financial incentive, although there was a small remuneration in teaching. The work in both areas was altruistic. Ma##'s jobs in posts such as Antwerp, Washington, DC, and Tijuana helped to pay for some of the long distance flights to visit our families. My daughter, Rebecca, was lucky to attend good American

## Library of Congress

schools in Antwerp, Washington, DC, and Tijuana. Looking back, it would have been in Rebecca's best interests to have had some after school activities in Antwerp and Tijuana, but the long distances from school to home made that impractical. However, the enormous cultural advantages of this life more than offset the lack of extracurricular activities.

Every member of the family needs a sense of belonging. Dependents need to grow, whether it is in a job, school, or voluntary project. It was important, also, for us to have some connection with a local church, where we could go for spiritual nurture. It was also vital to develop friendships, both official and personal, always keeping in mind that we were official representatives of the US government, a matter of pride to us.

End of interview